Estrada's demands not impossible–Honasan STORY ON PAGE A2

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- **Bush: All options for use of nukes** WORLD/ A11

Will police carry Erap to court?

Noynoy backs house arrest for Estrada

By Juliet L. Javellana

THE SON and namesake of the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., whose murder in 1983 triggered People Power I, has spoken out in favor of house arrest for Joseph Estrada.

"Maybe they should consider putting him under house arrest as a courtesy to a former President," Tarlac Rep. Benigno Aquino III told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Aquino said this would defuse tension, soothe Estrada's die-hard supporters, and show President Macapagal-Arroyo as a compassionate leader.

"But the judicial processes should continue," he quickly added.

Aquino called on Estrada to reconsider his rejection of the judicial system and his attacks on the judiciary.

"I can understand what the former President is going through. He is at the height of depression," said the con-

NOYNOY/A20

By Michael Lim Ubac, Volt Contreras, Carlito Pablo and TJ Burgonio

THE QUESTION is whether ousted President Joseph Estrada will be bodily carried to the Sandiganbayan if he refuses to attend the resumption of his trial today.

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto yesterday said "his (Estrada's) physical presence is very important" because the court would not be able to proceed with the arraignment in his absence.

"He has to attend the proceedings because he will be asked to enter a plea of guilty or not guilty to the perjury complaint," Desierto said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said bodily carrying Estrada from his suite at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center to the court was not a remote prospect.

"If he refuses, the police will ask for instructions from the Sandiganbayan," Tiglao said. "If the Sandiganbayan says he will have to be bodily taken, the police will have to comply with the order of the (court)."

"If he goes, then that will be OK," Tiglao added.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said Wednesday that he was opposed to the idea of having a recalcitrant Estrada bodily carried to court. Yesterday he said government officials had yet to agree on what action to take should the ex-President refuse to attend the trial.

"So far, the instruction (for the police) is that no force should be used," Perez said. "If the former President would like to violate the order of the Sandiganbayan, then we will report it to the (court)."

The anti-graft court had earlier ordered Estrada to be

WILL/A20

THE HEAT is smoking out the Abu Sayyaf bandits from Basilan as American and Filipino troops continue to make their heavily armed presence felt in the province. VAL HANDUMON

What is love? It's the smell of dad or mom

LONDON—Freud was right after all: Men and women are attracted to people who remind them of their parents—or at least smell like them.

This was the outstanding finding of a team of British researchers at the Museum of Science and Discovery, a think tank in the central England city of

WHAT/A18

US town offers to house frozen French couple

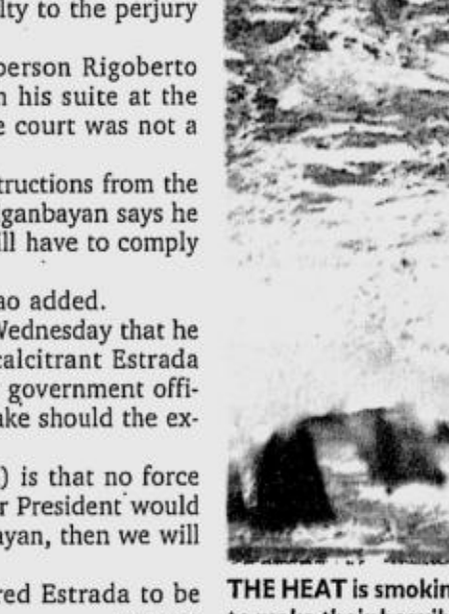
NEDERLAND, Colorado—The town that recently celebrated "Frozen Dead Guy Days" is now offering to house two more frozen corpses after French officials ordered that they be removed from their cryogenic chambers and buried.

Nederland is already well known for its own cryogenically frozen resident, "Grandpa" Bredo Morstoel, who has been kept on ice in a Tuff Shed since 1993.

A court in central France ruled Wednesday that the continued refrigeration of Raymond Martinot and Monique Leroy was against the law. The couple's son, Remy Martinot, 35, wanted to keep the bodies in the basement of the family's chateau in the town of Neuil-sur-Layon.

The administrative court in the town of Saumur authorized the use of force if necessary for the execution of the

US/A18



ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

P1-MILLION man, Abu Sayyaf member, Munib Assa, is arrested in Zamboanga City on charges of kidnapping and murder.

Military pressure forcing Abus to flee Basilan–AFP

By Martin P. Marfil, Joey R.B. Lozano and Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CONTINUING military pressure has forced many Abu Sayyaf bandits to seek sanctuary outside Basilan, leading to a "series of arrests," the deputy chief of the Southern Command said yesterday.

"The heat is on them so they are getting out of Basilan province and most of them are finding their way to Zamboanga City," Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Diaz said at a news briefing.

Recent arrests of the kidnappers in areas outside Basilan showed that the bandits were trying to flee the military dragnet, he added.

"Many of the rebels have escaped from Basilan and are hiding here in Zamboanga. But we have intensified intelligence efforts to locate them and neutralize the terrorists," Diaz said.

On Tuesday, the government arrested in Zamboanga City two Abu Sayyaf members, including Munib Assa who was later shown to the press. Both men had a P1-million prize on their heads.

Another suspected Abu Sayyaf bandit was arrested at a shopping mall in Zamboanga City on Wednesday.

In Camp Aguinaldo, a mayor from Basilan claimed that American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham were sighted on the outskirts of Lantawan town in the island-province at least twice this week.

Maluso Mayor Sakib Salajin claimed the Burnhams were spotted on Monday and then Wednesday, according to information he said was relayed to him by civilians in the area. He said

MILITARY/A21

Manila orphan leads 138 PMA graduates this year

By the PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A 24-year-old cadet from Sta. Cruz, Manila, who lost his father when he was a boy, topped this year's 138 graduates of the Philippine Military Academy here.

Cadet First Class Charlie Domingo Jr., who was raised by his grandmother after his father died, will graduate on March 24 valedictorian of the 2002 Class Banyuhay. He will join the Philippine Navy.

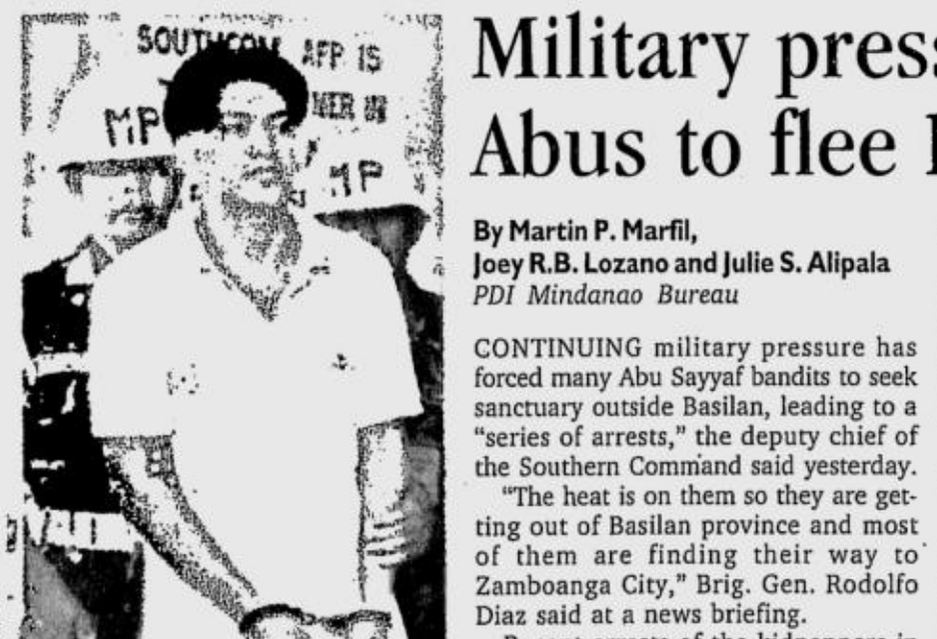
Based on an unofficial list, Cadet First Class Jean Alia Robles of Baliuag, Bulacan, is the lone female cadet among the top 10 PMA graduates this year. She is ranked 10th. Nine other female cadets are also graduating this year.

Robles' parents believe that Jean Alia, 20, can best serve the country if she is sent to Mindanao because her mother, Perusa Yasin, is a Muslim.

Jean Alia, who is joining the Army, is following in the footsteps of her father, retired Army Col. Wilfredo Robles.

The elder Robles said his daughter

MANILA/A18



ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

SUPRISINGLY SMALL... Compared to the Philippine Air Force OV-10s the US unmanned aerial vehicle used for surveillance operations looks like a toy plane.

Tiglao friends deny ransom payment links

By Carlito Pablo, Rocky Nazareno and Juliet Javellana

A "LONGTIME acquaintance" of presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao was led to deny for a second time facilitating ransom payments to the Abu Sayyaf, as a controversial police intelligence report had claimed.

"I categorically deny the contents of that intelligence report, those that pertain to me, because it never happened," Stefani "Stef" Saño told the INQUIRER.

Saño and George Baviera, another person mentioned in the report, are both acknowledged friends of Tiglao,

TIGLAO/A20

Second FRONT PAGE

ESTRADA

Erap's demand not impossible–Honasan

By Rocky Nazareno Cynthia D. Balana and Juliet L. Javellana

THE CALL for Chief Justice Hilario Davide to resign "is not an impossible demand under our democracy."

This was the contention of opposition Sen. Gregorio Honasan to the call made by former President Joseph Estrada for Davide and Associate Justices Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio to step down for allegedly orchestrating his ouster in January last year.

"We have institutionalized people power and if this is not given (vent) through the normal mechanisms, then the people will express their will (in the streets)," Honasan said in a press conference.

Honasan said that Estrada's claim that he would never get a fair trial would then be "validated by the Filipino people either through their representatives or, if necessary, in the streets."

"It has happened before and it can happen again," he added, alluding to the May 1 siege of Malacañang last year by the masses loyal to Estrada. Honasan himself had faced charges of rebellion for a time in connection with that attack.

"If this is how the rest of the Filipinos feel, especially the majority of the ordinary Filipinos, this will continue to be valid demands, unconditional demands," Honasan said.

Baseless

Administration Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., however, said Estrada's call for the resignation of Davide was "baseless and uncalled for."

In an interview, Magsaysay reminded Estrada that it was he who appointed Davide to the Supreme Court.

According to Magsaysay, the resignation call was a "non-issue" and the people should not be bothered with it.

Sen. Juan Flavier said it might be better if Estrada just asked his allies in the House to file an impeachment case against Davide, if he were really after the neck of the Chief Justice.

Flavier might have been referring to the impeachment complaint drawn up against Davide and the other SC justices by lawyer Crispin T. Reyes, president of the Anti-Graft League of the Philippines Inc.

'Don't know him'

Reyes, 86, said he was filing the impeachment complaint at the House not to benefit Estrada, who according to him "should be jailed," but because Davide and the other justices had allegedly illegally installed Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as President.

"This (impeachment complaint) is good for the people. He (Estrada) is merely an incidental party to this complaint," Reyes said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER. He said he did not know Estrada and has not seen his movies. "I don't know him from Adam," he added.

Reyes said his 25-page impeachment complaint has secured the endorsement of a congressman, whom he refused to identify.

The other day, House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said Reyes and former Assemblyman Vicente Millora had handed the impeachment complaint to him.

Padilla said the minority assigned Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen to review the complaint to see if it should be endorsed by the group.

Yesterday, Dilangalen said he was waiting for Reyes to "improve" the grounds for his complaint. He said all 15 justices should not be included in the impeachment bid.

But Reyes expressed optimism his complaint would be approved by the House. He said he intends to file the complaint after Holy Week.

Reyes charged the Davide-led court of culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of the public trust when they declared a vacancy in the presidency and installed Ms Macapagal as the new President on Jan. 20, 2001. ***With Connie E. Fernandez and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau***

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Erap pal charged anew in BW scandal

By Michael L. Ubac

THE JUSTICE department has charged anew businessman Dante Tan, a close friend of former President Joseph Estrada, and seven others in connection with the country's biggest insider trading scandal involving BW Resources Corp.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said four separate cases of violation of the Revised Securities Act were filed with the Pasig City Regional Trial Court on Monday.

Besides Tan, Perez indicted Eduardo Lim Jr., Jimmy Juan, Mario Juan, Hermogenes Laddaran, Raul de Castro and Federico Galang of A.T. De Castro Securities Corp., and Eduardo Co of Aurora Securities Inc.

Perez recommended a P1-million bail for each of the accused on each count of violation. All of them are at-large.

"I have also asked the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation to place the accused under its watch list while awaiting the issuance of a hold-departure order by the court," Perez told reporters.

The DOJ panel, however, cleared more than 50 other individuals, eight brokers and two investment houses of any wrongdoing because of "insufficient evidence."

The charges stemmed from the sudden rise and fall of BW shares in 1999 that nearly caused the collapse of the Philippine Stock Exchange. BW shares rocketed more than 5,200 percent from P2 to P107 per share over an eight-month period ending in October 2000.

BW shares plummeted the day after it was announced that Macau casino mogul Stanley Ho had taken a minority stake and had been elected company chair. Many small investors were ruined, setting off a government investigation.

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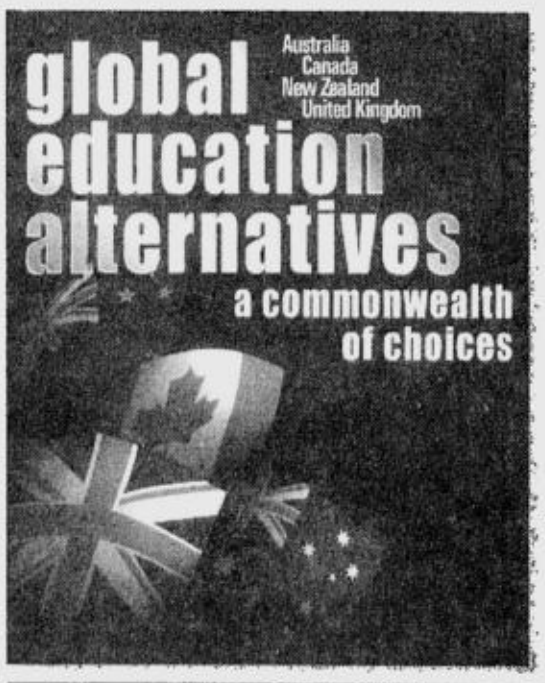

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16 March 2002 – 9:00AM – 4:00PM
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1400 – 1450 Understanding British Education
1500 – 1550 Study in Canada
1600 – 1650 The New World Class. Educated in New Zealand
1700 – 1750 Experiencing Australian Education
1800 – 1850 Canadian Alumni Association
1900 – 1950 Student's Life: UK
16 March 2002
0930 – 1120 Australian Institutions
1130 – 1350 Canadian Institutions
1400 – 1455 UK Institutions
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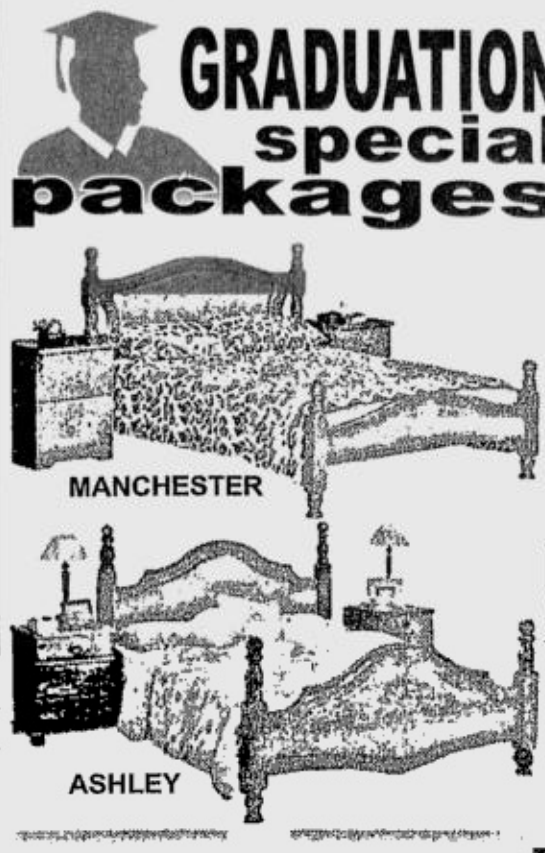

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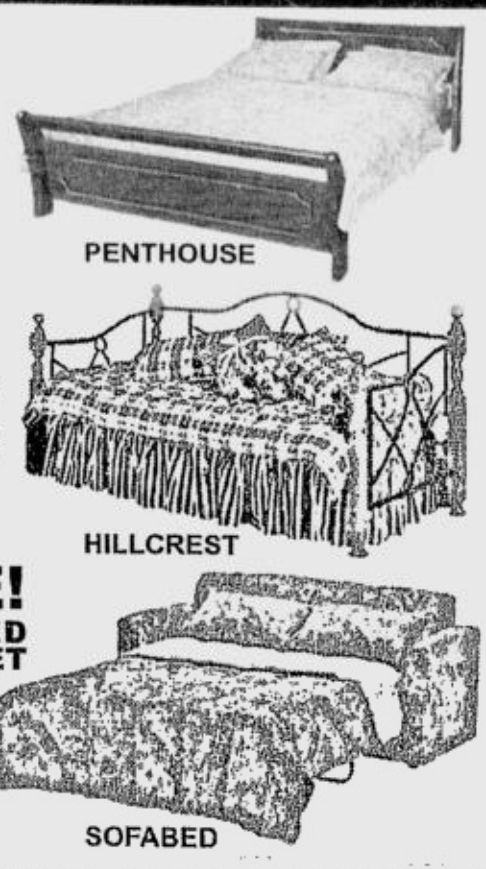

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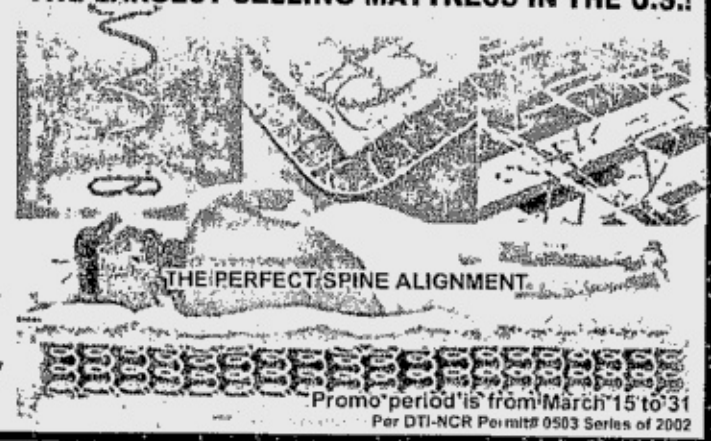

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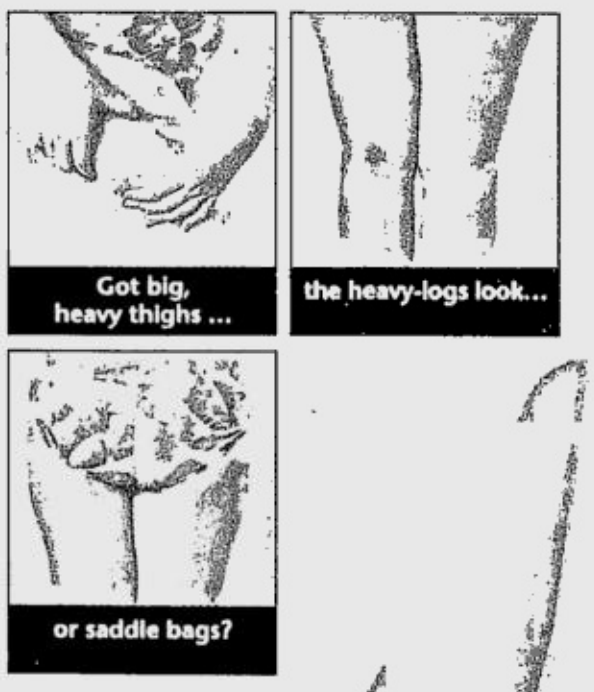

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House leaders want book thrown at Syjuco

By Christine O. Avendaño

AFTER throwing him off the session floor for "unruly behavior" the other night, the House leadership seems bent on throwing the book at Iloilo Rep. Augusto "Boboy" Syjuco.

House Majority Floor Leader Neptali Gonzales II said yesterday the House leadership intends to strip Syjuco of his "majority entitlements," that is, his chairmanship and membership in House committees that were given to him for being part of the majority coalition.

Syjuco is also facing possible investigation by the House ethics committee for his "unparliamentary conduct," according to Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya.

"Aside from delaying proceedings in the House for five hours, he branded congressmen as macho dancers and Speaker Jose de Venecia as a slave driver," Andaya said.

Gonzales said Syjuco, a member of the Lakas-NUCD party, should not wait for his posts to be taken from him but should resign "out of *delicadeza* (propriety)."

"If he wants to be with the opposition, then he should join them," Gonzales said.

But Syjuco apparently was not fazed by the threats of his colleagues after he was thrown off the session floor Wednesday night and his privileged speech ordered deleted from House records.

"Damn the torpedoes, full steam ahead," Syjuco said at a news conference yesterday where he defended his actions, particularly his questioning of the approval by the House on Second Reading of the Special Purpose Asset Vehicles Act of 2002.

The SPAV bill, which would allow asset management firms to buy the non-performing assets of banks, was approved on third reading Wednesday night by an overwhelming majority.

In his speech titled "Nights of the Macho Dancers," Syjuco accused the House of railroading the SPAV bill after only 30 members of the 214-strong House voted for its passage on second reading on Tuesday.

Yesterday, Syjuco insisted approval of the SPAV bill "violated the people's trust and was unconstitutional."

He said if there was anybody who should be subjected to a House ethics committee inquiry, it was the "House leadership" itself for "insisting" on approval of the SPAV bill without a quorum.

Reacting to House leadership accusations he had delayed proceedings, Syjuco said there was no need to rush the SPAV bill or the Securitization Act bill because their counterpart bills in the Senate were still in their respective committees.

GSIS WALKOUT ERIK ARAZAS

Employees of the Government Service Insurance System walk out of their work to seek the dismissal of GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia for alleged oppression and mismanagement of funds. But Garcia said the union staged yesterday's protest action to force management to go easy on a union official who was suspended for unruly conduct. He also maintained that the GSIS remained financially stable, contrary to the union's assertion.

Benipayo: No bitterness

By Blanche S. Rivera

"NO bitterness, no resentment," was all embattled Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo could say even as President Macapagal-Arroyo, who appointed him as Comelec chair, hinted that she could drop him to settle the perpetual row in the poll body.

Benipayo, however, reiterated that he and his two allied commissioners Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr. would not resign unless the Commission on Appointments finally decides to reject their confirmation or if Malacañang bluntly asks them to step down.

Benipayo said he would rather that "everyone" just followed the rule of law and wait for the Supreme Court's decision on the Voters Registration and Identification System, which he said was the "cause of all the attacks" against him.

"It's fine with me if I am relieved. If the CA rejects me, that's okay. I will step down because that is the law. It's their prerogative," Benipayo said in an earlier press briefing. "It's what I've been asking people to do, just follow the law."

He said he has never asked and will never ask the President to back him in his battles, especially against commissioners Luz Tancangco, Ralph Lantion, Rufino Javier and Mehol Sadain, or support his appointment.

"My position is very clear: I was asked by the president to be chairman, I took on the job... We were appointed, and we have a solemn obligation to protect the interest of the government," Benipayo said.

"If we see a contract that is a plunder (of the Comelec funds), then we will resist such contract," he added. He said he would oppose the VRIS for as long as he is still in the Comelec and will instead push for a cheaper and more effective modernization project.

He said the implementation of the contract with the Photokina-led consortium for the P6.5-billion VRIS was the root of all fighting in the Comelec, with Tancangco's camp actively lobbying for the implementation of the contract.

To stop the endless bickering, Benipayo said they should all just wait for the Supreme Court to decide whether to implement the contract or not, adding he would abide by the tribunal's decision even if it was against their will.

Photokina Marketing Corp., however, said it was "grossly inaccurate and unfair" for Benipayo to blame all his woes and the personal attacks against him on his rejection of the VRIS project, saying the constant bickering among Comelec officials had always been public.

"It is not our practice to participate in negative publicity attacks against anyone and will never engage in such low-level mud-raking," Photokina said in a statement yesterday.

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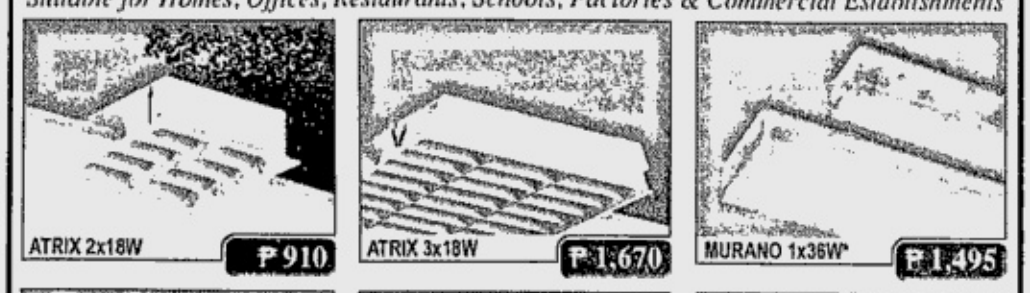

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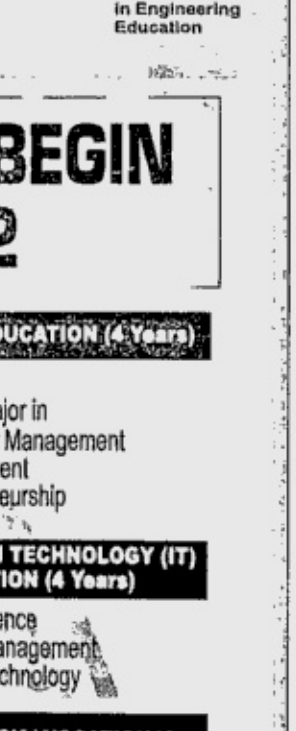

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, March 15, 2002
4th Week of Lent
1st Reading: Wis 2:1, 12-22
Gospel: Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Jesus went around Galilee; he would not go about in Judea because the Jews wanted to kill him. Now the Jewish feast of the Tents was at hand.

But after his brothers had gone to the festival, he also went up, not publicly but in secret.

Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Is this not the man they want to kill? And here he is speaking freely, and they don't say a word to him? Can it be that the rulers know that this is really the Christ? Yet we know where this man comes from; but when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from."

So Jesus announced in a loud voice in the Temple court where he was teaching, "You say that you know me and know where I come from! I have not come of myself; I was sent by the One who is true, and you don't know him. I know him for I come from him and he sent me."

They would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him because his time had not yet come.

Commentary

All over the world, new Christians are preparing for baptism. Today's gospel is a proclamation of the faith we all profess: Christ is our brother: Jesus of Nazareth. Christ is our God: Alpha and Omega. Born of Mary: we know where he comes from. Conceived by the Spirit: we do not know where he comes from. The words of our first reading are as true as ever: "The godless say, 'Let us lie in wait for the virtuous man, since he annoys us and opposes our way of life... He claims to have knowledge of God and calls himself a son of the Lord... Let us test him with cruelty and explore this gentleness of his.' " Speak up in defense of truth as Jesus did, and you will not run short of opposition. But truth is of God; it has a way of rising again.

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Pro-death solons still have numbers

By Christine Avendaño

IT'S 68 for and 62 against the death penalty so far.

Pro and anti-death penalty congressmen are now moving to consolidate their forces for their respective positions.

Anti-death penalty congressmen gathered the signatures Wednesday night of 62 of their colleagues in support of pending bills in the House calling for the abolition of the death penalty law.

This was against the 68 signatures now obtained by pro-death penalty congressmen led by the group of Bukidnon Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri in support of his House resolution seeking for the full implementation of the death penalty law.

Albay Rep. Krisel Lagman-Luistro told the INQUIRER yesterday that she and other colleagues initiated the signature campaign to express their support for the repeal of the death penalty law.

Luistro said in a phone interview that the signatories also understood that their names would be mentioned in press statements they would be issuing against the death penalty law.

Luistro said she and most of the signatories may have voted for the approval of the Dangerous Drug Act of 2002 on final reading Wednesday night but they "reserved their opposition" to the provision in the bill that called for the imposition of the death penalty for drug offenders.

She said she knew of other congressmen who would support this signature drive and named Representatives Exequiel Javier and Ronaldo Zamora as among them.

Among the signatories were members of the House minority—Minority Floor Leader Carlos Padilla and Representatives Didagen Dilangalen, Florencio Abad, Oscar Moreno, Loretta Ann Rosales, Abraham Mitra, Teodoro Locsin Jr., Francis Escudero and Gilberto Teodoro.

Bayan Muna Representatives Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza said that together with their colleague Rep. Crispin Beltran, they also signed their names to support the repeal of the death penalty law.

Mitra, in a statement, said many congressmen would join the anti-death penalty camp after they return from the Lenten break.

"Mankind will commemorate next week the life and times of history's most famous victim of capital punishment," Mitra said. "I think the experience of the Man on the Cross would convince many of his followers how unjust death penalty is."

But Zubiri said he has already gotten 68 congressmen to support his house resolution No. 479 "expressing the sense of the House for the full implementation of the death penalty law.

"A few felons should die so that many law-abiding citizens shall live," Zubiri said.

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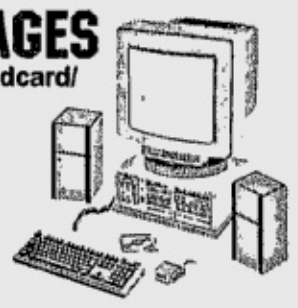

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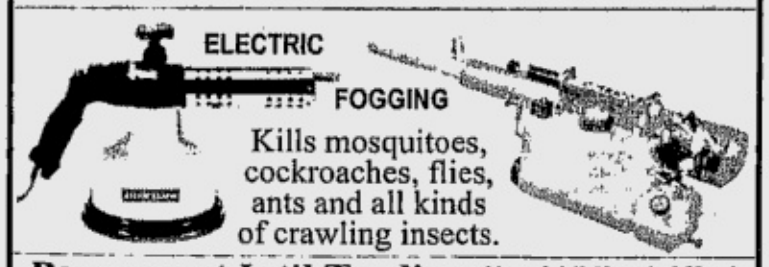

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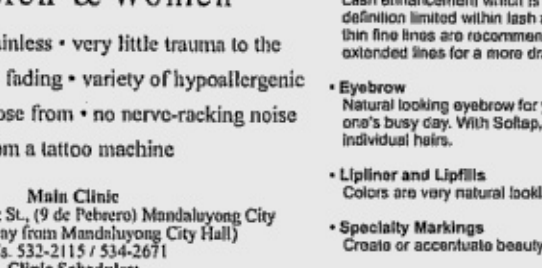

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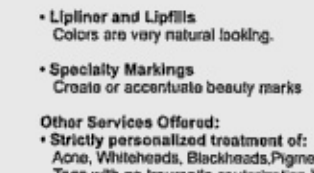

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- WORK SIMPLIFICATION AND IMPROVEMENT TECHNIQUES FOR MANAGERS AND SUPERVISORS — March 18, 2002 * — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM
- HUMAN RELATIONS — March 16, 2002 — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM
- CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT — March 16 - April 6, 2002 — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM
- CUSTOMER INTIMACY: What It Is and Why It Wins? — March 16, 2002 — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM
- ESSENTIAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS EVERY SECRETARY, EXECUTIVE STAFF AND TECHNICAL STAFF SHOULD HAVE — March 18 - 22, 2002 — M-W-F 6:00PM-9:00PM
- SUPERVISORY DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING — March 18 - April 1, 2002 — M-W-F 6:00PM-8:00PM
- EFFECTIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION — March 18 - April 1, 2002 — M-W-F 6:00PM-8:00PM
- PROFESSIONAL TELEPHONE SELLING (How to Find New Business and Increase Sales by Telephone) — March 23, 2002 — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM
- HOW TO DELEGATE WORK AND ENSURE IT'S DONE RIGHT — March 23, 2002 — Saturday 1:00PM-5:00PM

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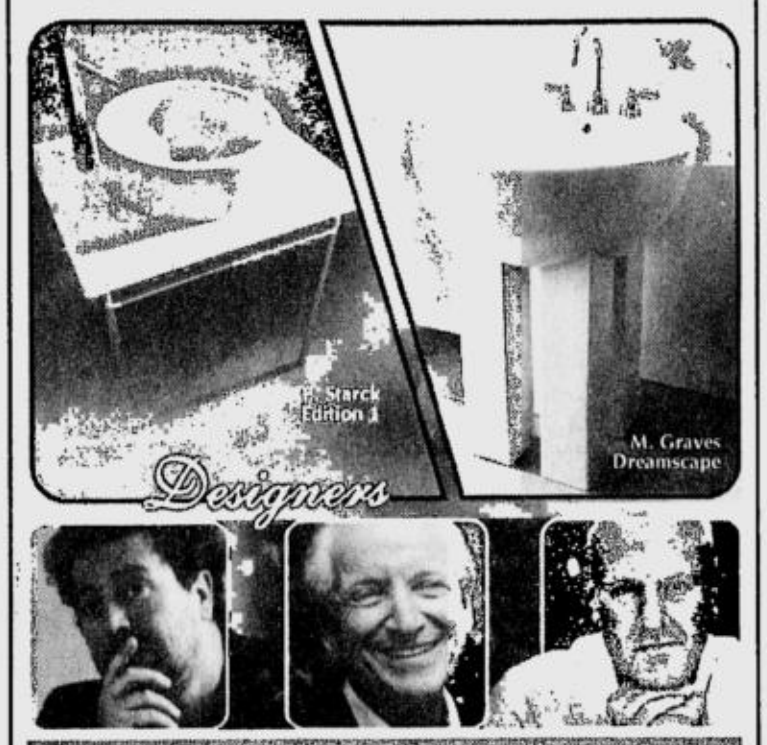

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40% OFF

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GE Cordless Phone 6700 (Black & White) w/ FREE Citizen Calculator SLD-100
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Olympia Manual Typewriter Traveller Deluxe w/ FREE Gift pack
ONLY P3,445

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Computer Chair w/ Gaslift
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40% OFF

Executive Chair
Before P5,825
NOW P3,495
40% OFF

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Back Cabinet
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NOW P1,395
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40% OFF

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1002, Series of 2002

JOAN BONDOC

DOY'S ORDEAL AND TURMOIL
Former Vice President Salvador Laurel autographs copies of his book "Through Ordeal and Turmoil" during its launching Wednesday at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club ballroom in Mandaluyong City. The book is a distillation of Laurel's thoughts and ideas of nationhood, taken from his discourses during the last 30 years when he served as senator, opposition leader, vice president and foreign secretary. The quotations were gathered, selected and edited by his wife, Celia Diaz Laurel. The foreword was written by former Justice Isagani Cruz.

French kidnap victims' suit won't prosper–Guingona

THE LAWSUIT filed by two French kidnap victims against deposed President Joseph Estrada will not prosper in court because he had invoked the power of a sovereign state to order an attack against the Abu Sayyaf while the hostages were being held in captivity, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. said yesterday.

Guingona, who is also foreign secretary, said contrary to claims of French lawyer Etienne Rosenthal, Estrada did not violate the 1979 International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages because the order to attack was justified.

"The lawsuit will not prosper in court," Guingona told reporters yesterday.

But lawyer Marie Yuviengco, a correspondent counsel of Rosenthal, said it was "premature" for Guingona to conclude that the case will not prosper in court.

"Why not let Mr. Estrada raise that as his defense? Let the court of France decide on the matter," said Yuviengco, a member of the Public Interest Law Center that helps Rosenthal handle the building up of the case in the Philippines against Estrada.

The liability damage suit was filed on March 12 in the Court of Nantes-France by Stephane Loisy and girlfriend Sonia Wendling against Estrada for allegedly endangering their lives by ordering an attack while they were still in the custody of the Abu Sayyaf.

Loisy and Wendling were among the 21 foreigners taken hostage by the Abu Sayyaf bandit from a resort in Sipadan in Malaysia on April 23, 2000 and were brought to Jolo, Sulu, where they were held captives for nearly five months.

'Daing' back in Australia

By G. Lacuarta

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture announced yesterday the resumption of export of the Philippines' dried fish, otherwise known as "*daing*," to Australia.

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said the lifting of the suspension on the exportation of the local dried fish developed through the intervention of the country's agriculture attaché to Canberra, Araceli Albarece, and the Taguig-based Food Development Center (FDC).

The export resumed after Albarece recommended a pre-shipment test on "*daing*" by the FDC, to which Pagasa, the biggest Sydney-based importer of Philippine processed foods, has agreed.

According to Montemayor, the suspension was released early last year after the Australian Quarantine Officers refused to accept the entry of fish shipments of Pag-asa due to high level content of histamine found in the Philippines' dried fish.

The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) in 2001 said the histamine content of the Philippine "*daing*" averaged 700 milligrams per kilogram, which is seven times higher than the 100 milligram per kilogram allowable amount specified in the Australian Food Standards Code, the Agriculture chief noted.

EMPIRE INSURANCE COMPANY
Synopsis of Annual Statement
As of 31 December 2000

ADMITTED ASSETS

Bonds	P	90,496,045.57
Treasury Bills		18,619,276.52
Stocks		16,499,913.82
Real State		9,654,954.50
Collateral Loans		115,003.00
Security Fund		17,902.00
Other Investments		15,162,500.00
Cash on Hand and in Banks		1,331,372.73
Premiums Receivable		5,609,176.00
Premiums Due from Ceding Companies		15,412,607.69
Premiums Reserve Withheld By Ceding Companies		53,103.00
Reinsurance Recoverable on Losses		13,044,345.00
Accrued Investment Income		33,991.85
EDP Equipment		550,431.00
Total Admitted Assets	**P**	**186,800,622.68**

LIABILITIES

Losses and Claims Payable	P	15,756,916.93
Catastrophe Loss Reserve		280,755.55
Reserve for Unearned Premiums		21,112,110.00
Premiums Due to Reinsurers		9,966,798.00
Premiums Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers		2,681,663.00
Loss Reserve Withheld for Reinsurers		12,798.00
Commissions Payable		6,102,110.00
Taxes Payable		6,019,915.33
Accounts/Notes Payable		826,387.00
Unearned Bond Discount		971,578.36
Other Liabilities		4,343,782.00
Total Liabilities	**P**	**68,074,814.17**

STOCKHOLDERS' EQUITY

Capital Stock Paid-Up	P	50,000,000.00
Special Surplus Fund:		
Fluctuation Reserve-Stocks		3,727,908.86
Retained Earnings		64,997,899.65
Total Stockholders' Equity	**P**	**118,725,808.51**
Total Liabilities and Stockholders' Equity	**P**	**186,800,622.68**

(This synopsis, prepared from the 2000 Annual Statement, approved by the Insurance Commissioner is published pursuant to Section 225 of the Insurance Code.)

New chief vows 'world-class' Customs

By Blanche S. Rivera

FORMER Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo yesterday took over the reins at the Bureau of Customs, warning unscrupulous officials and employees at the agency he would rid it of its negative image and make it "world class."

Bernardo also said he would make collections an important criterion in the evaluation of BoC employees, especially port officials, to help the agency attain its target revenue of P115 billion for the year.

"I assure everyone that for as long as (they) do (their) jobs and do them well, they have nothing to fear," Bernardo said in his speech during turnover rites at the BoC social hall.

"For those who will not (do their jobs), however, I serve fair warning that we shall be firm in taking appropriate action warranted by the circumstances," he said.

Bernardo took over from the retiring Titus Villanueva.

And as though on cue, customs collector Billy Bibit agreed to vacate his post at the Subic Bay free port after Bernardo ordered his transfer to the Clark Field, Pampanga port.

Bibit for months had legally resisted his transfer to Clark by Villanueva.

Bibit said he would report to Clark in Pampanga next week. He said he decided to obey the order after Malacañang elevated Clark from a subport to a principal port.

The Court of Appeals had upheld Villanueva's decision assigning Bibit to Clark.

OUTGOING Customs Commissioner Titus Villanueva turns over to his successor, Finance Undersecretary Antonio Bernardo, the Customs flag as Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho watches. ERIK ARAZAS

Court halts new rules on labor recruitment

THE PHILIPPINE Overseas Employment Administration suffered yet another setback after a Quezon City court ordered it to stop exercising regulatory functions over recruitment agencies and implementing the new guidelines governing the manpower export industry.

QC Judge Jose Paneda issued a writ of preliminary injunction against the Department of Labor and Employment, and the POEA, which were set to implement stricter rules and regulations for recruiters.

In a five-page order, Paneda said the Asian Recruitment Council Philippine Chapter Inc., which filed the petition for injunction, should be protected from the adverse effects of the new rules pending the resolution of its case against labor officials in court.

Paneda further enjoined the DOLE and POEA from "enforcing any department order regulating or amending the existing department order on the recruitment and placement activities of licensed agencies."

7 Dutch recruiters arrested

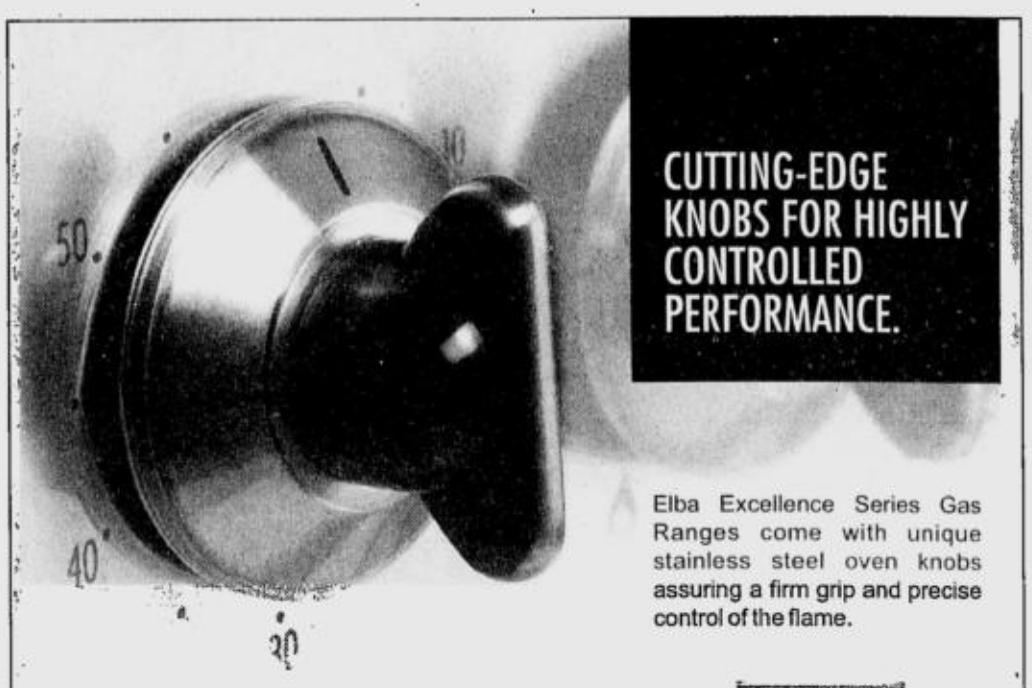
SEVEN Dutch nationals have been arrested for allegedly running an unlicensed labor recruitment agency, the immigration bureau said yesterday.

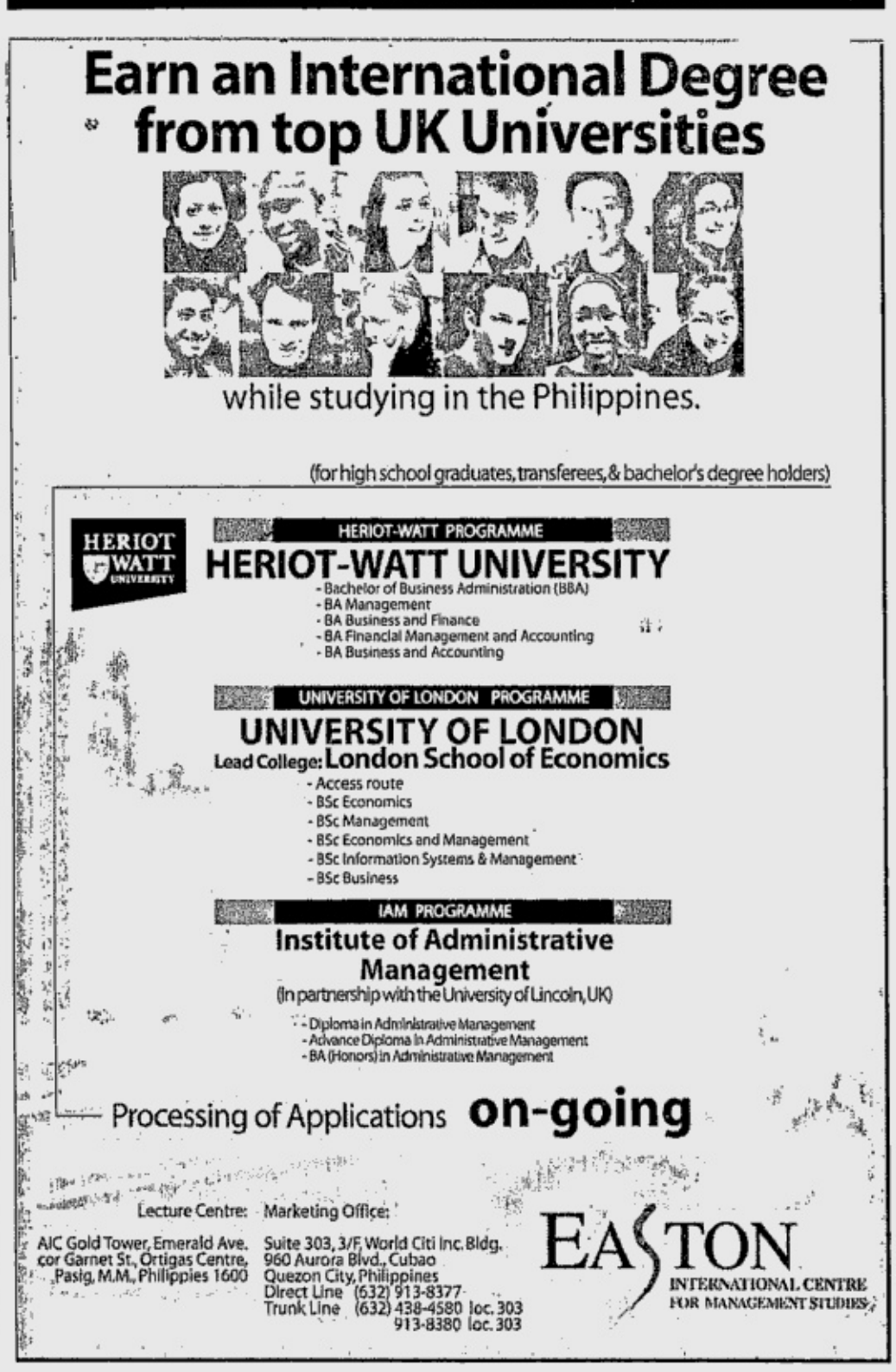
Eric Luzac, 49, and his six employees would be deported, said immigration chief Andrea Domingo.

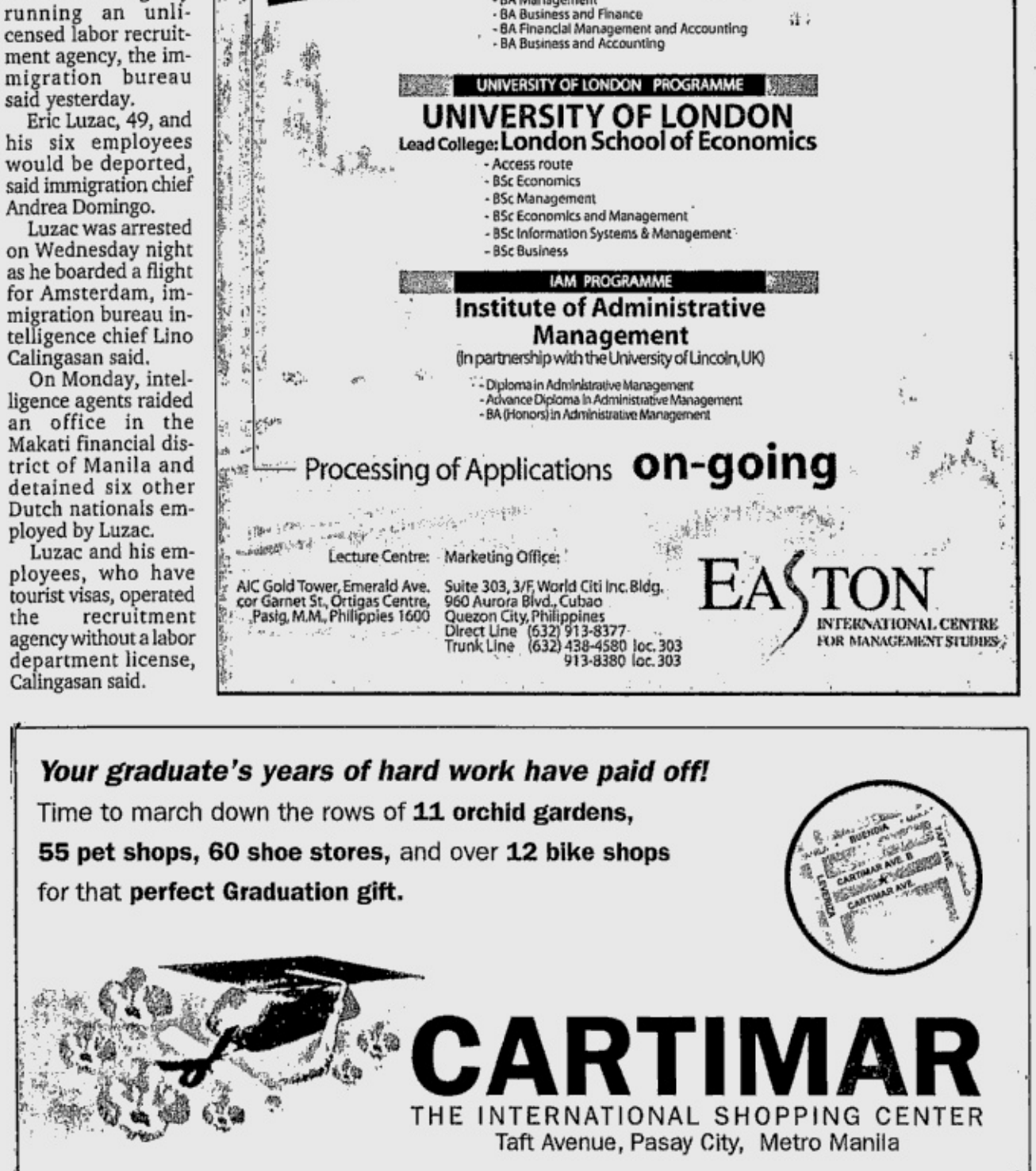
Luzac was arrested on Wednesday night as he boarded a flight for Amsterdam, immigration bureau intelligence chief Lino Calingasan said.

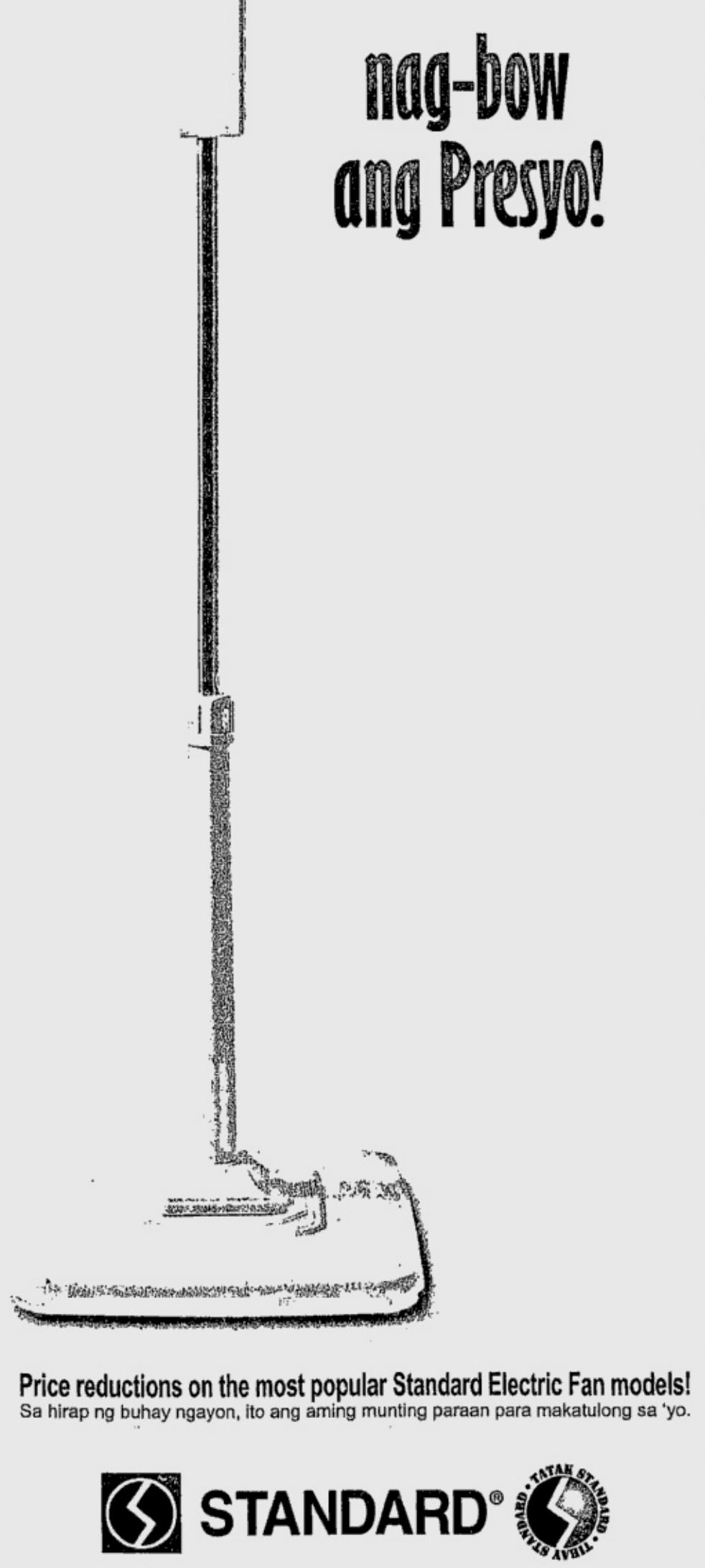
On Monday, intelligence agents raided an office in the Makati financial district of Manila and detained six other Dutch nationals employed by Luzac.

Luzac and his employees, who have tourist visas, operated the recruitment agency without a labor department license, Calingasan said.









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OPINION

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Tactical retreat

EDITORIAL

AFTER STAGING that drama of dismissing his lawyers and loudly declaring for all to hear that he had lost all hope of getting a fair trial, Joseph Estrada is singing a different tune. The disgraced former president said Wednesday he was willing to recall his lawyers and stand trial for plunder and other crimes. "I still believe in our justice system, but not in the people running it" he told the INQUIRER.

That wasn't what he was saying two weeks ago when he defiantly dared the Sandiganbayan justices hearing his cases to send him to the gallows. "This early I can sense that I will no longer obtain justice," he said then, adding that he would just leave his fate to God and the Filipino people.

The savage assault on the country's justice system launched by Estrada and his camp, including his wife Sen. Luisa Ejercito, has backfired. Political leaders, including some of his old allies, seem to have been turned off by the attacks and are rallying behind the judiciary. Where just last month a majority of senators and congressmen crossed party lines to sign a resolution requesting the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada to go to the United States to have his arthritic knees operated, some withdrew their signatures when his closest allies admitted that the trip would be a prelude to exile. After Estrada questioned the integrity of the justices and the impartiality of the courts, President Macapagal, who was whispered to be behind the initiative to let him leave, was forced to come out in defense of what is considered to be the weakest branch of the government and rule out a political solution to his legal predicament. Now his old political lieutenants like San Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora appear reluctant to support his attempt to wreck the whole judicial system. Estrada's executive secretary would not even touch an impeachment complaint against all the justices of the Supreme Court filed by a self-styled anti-graft crusader.

With his announcement that he is willing to submit himself to the judgment of the court, is Estrada beating a tactical retreat? Maybe. But first he wants Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Justices Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio to resign. Davide and Panganiban, he said, played key roles in stripping him of the presidency and have prejudged him. Carpio, as Estrada's spokesperson said, is a Macapagal appointee and was once a partner in a law firm that is influential with the administration.

At least this is an improvement on the Estradas' blanket condemnation of the judiciary. Maybe they realized that if the Supreme Court justices were to heed their call for a mass resignation, every member of the new Court would be a Macapagal appointee. What they don't acknowledge is that Davide and Panganiban have comported themselves with *delicadeza* in the cases where bias was imputed to them by Estrada and his camp followers. For instance, when Estrada challenged the legitimacy of Ms Macapagal's assumption of the presidency, the two justices inhibited themselves from the deliberations.

Another condition Estrada has put forward for returning to the courtroom is that the special division created by the Supreme Court to speed up his trial be replaced by a regular Sandiganbayan division. Estrada must have forgotten that he was already being tried by a regular division headed by Justice Anacleto Badoy, but the case went nowhere because his lawyers either kept questioning the impartiality of some justices or filing numerous motions in an obvious attempt to delay the proceedings. This was the reason the Supreme Court decided to create the special division. And if Estrada is innocent, he would welcome it for it would lead to his quick exoneration.

Significantly, the creation and composition of the special division were decided upon by a group of justices who owed their appointments to the deposed president. Estrada, who can't believe that some people are capable of making objective and rational decisions, should have been the first to take this as a personal favor to him.

But no, he and his lawyers had to manufacture issues against the special division. Its very existence threatens their game plan of delaying the trial and final judgment. So to Estrada, it's either he gets a court of his own choosing or he will refuse to recognize its authority to try his case. Any other court is incapable of rendering impartial justice.

Erap is changing the rules for trials

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

FORMER PRESIDENT Estrada is really changing the rules for the justice system in the Philippines. Like BC and AD in history (for Before Christ and Anno Domini), the Philippine justice system can now be divided into BE (Before Erap) and AE (After Erap). Before Erap, the justices and judges tell the defendant what he can and cannot do. They set the conditions for his trial. After Erap, it is the defendant who now tells the court what to do. It is the accused who now sets the conditions.

For example, Erap, defendant in four criminal cases, is now telling the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan what to do. He has imposed conditions to be followed before he agrees to be tried by them. He now wants to choose the Sandiganbayan justices who will try him. He now demands the abolition of the special Sandiganbayan court created by the Supreme Court to try the cases against him. He wants the cases assigned to one of the five regular divisions of the Sandiganbayan. If you'll remember, the special court was created because Erap did not want Justice Anacleto Badoy, head of the Third Division, to be among those who will try him.

He is even demanding the resignation of Chief Justice Hilario Davide and Associate Justices Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio. He accused them of "coordinating" his downfall. For her part, his wife, Sen. Loi Ejercito, has accused the whole tribunal of having "prejudged" the cases against Erap.

Erap had dismissed all his nine defense lawyers, refused to accept the new lawyers assigned to him by the Sandiganbayan and refused to participate in his trial, saying that "he has lost faith in the justice system." But apparently, he still has faith in it if he will be allowed to choose the justices who will try him.

* * *

Do you know that the government almost lost the coconut levy case in the Supreme Court? Danding Cojuangco nearly won, according to former Senate President Jovito Salonga. He faxed me the reasons why:

"The decision penned by Justice Artemio Panganiban declaring the coconut levy fund as prima facie public in character was carried by a vote of 10 (joining Panganiban were Chief Justice Davide, Justices Bellosillo, Puno, Vitug, Mendoza, Quisumbing, Buena, De Leon and Carpio) to five (Justices Melo, Kapunan, Pardo, Santiago and Gutierrez).

"While joining with the majority that the coconut levy is indeed public, Justice Jose Vitug, joined by Justice Reynato Puno, however, filed a separate dissenting opinion stating that Cojuangco's sequestered UCPB shares have already been proven to be private in character and thus belong to him.

"As background, it should be explained that there were two sets of claimants to the sequestered UCPB shares, namely, (1) Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. and (2) the Coconut Federation of the Philippines, or Cocofed, which claims to represent "over one million coconut farmers." During the martial law years, the government purchased First United Bank with coco levy funds and renamed it United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB). Cojuangco contended that 10 percent of the purchased shares belonged to him as his commission in selling the bank to the government. Justices Vitug and Puno agreed with him.

"Therefore, of the 15 members of the Court, Cojuangco actually gathered seven votes (the five dissenters—Melo, Kapunan, Pardo, Santiago, Gutierrez plus Vitug and Puno) or one vote short of the majority.

"After the SC handed down its decision, Cojuangco, through his counsel, Estelito Mendoza, wanted to invalidate the vote of Justice Carpio (who sided with Panganiban) on the ground that the latter, while still a private lawyer, filed a separate case in the Supreme Court questioning the constitutionality of an executive order and a presidential decree of Marcos declaring the coconut levy as private. Furthermore, prior to his joining the Court, Justice Carpio supposedly wrote a four-part column in a daily newspaper that 'coconut levy funds are public funds.' Finally, he was counsel to President Ramos when the latter issued an order classifying the funds as public in character.

"However, the Supreme Court, in a resolution dated Feb. 26, 2002, denied the Cojuangco motion to disqualify Carpio reasoning that the constitutionality of the Marcos executive order and presidential decree is irrelevant. Furthermore, the mere fact that as a former columnist, Justice Carpio has written on the coconut levy fund will not disqualify him, in the same manner that jurists will not be disqualified just because as textbook writers, they may have given their opinion on the question involved in a case.

"The Supreme Court also said that Carpio's stint as legal adviser to President Ramos did not nullify his vote. The Court recalled that in 1941, the effort to disqualify then Justice Sabino Padilla on the ground that he was the justice secretary who had advised the President on a question pending in the Court, was turned down.

"Had Cojuangco succeeded in nullifying Carpio's vote, he would have won in his effort to own UCPB shares in his name.

"With this denial of the effort of lawyer Estelito P. Mendoza to oust Carpio from the case, the government on behalf of all coconut farmers, was able to completely take over UCPB."

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: Subject of next Monday's Kapihan sa Manila (Hotel) is smut, which is fast proliferating in the streets of Metro Manila. Do you know that there are at least 31 dirty magazines being published here for homosexuals?

Guests are members of the National Movement Against Pornography headed by Tita Pilapil-Reverente.

Still, skulls and crossbones

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

REY Rosales presents one side of the equation. A decent nation, he says (Letters, 3/12/02) plays by the rules. We are signatories to several international copyright laws. We are bound by them. "Just because piracy is rampant in the Philippines doesn't mean the authorities should give up chasing those who make millions by copying and distributing recordings illegally." Copyright laws are there to protect creative people. They are an incentive for artists and scientists to produce."

Another letter writer, Rosemarie Dinio, presents the other side of the equation. She is glad, she says, that someone has written about piracy without berating consumers. Like any self-respecting person, she says, she is against piracy. But when she sees the original CDs her son buys for his school work, she is aghast. Last week, she says, she and her son watched a movie in Mandaluyong, and she had to shell out P200 for the both of them. It was enough, she said, to foreswear watching movies. She could not blame others, she said, if they just opted to watch the pirated stuff.

Rosales of course is right to insist that artists and scientists should be protected. But the question is from what, and how. My disaffection with the current anti-piracy campaign of local entertainers and friends is that they are confused about both.

What are we protecting the artists from when we spend our time raiding the Manila Pier and Virra Mall, or even the warehouses that supply them? Only reality. The reality is that CDs now cost less than P10 bucks retail, so you can imagine how much they cost wholesale. A couple of years ago, someone told me they would go down to P5 in time. I thought he was exaggerating. As it turned out, he was making a conservative estimate. Go to Quiapo and see for yourself.

Of course creations, grandly called intellectual property—grandly, because it's countries like the United States that make the rules on what may or may not be included among intellectual property; as a Chinese official said, what if they charged Americans royalty for eating noodles?—should be rewarded. That doesn't mean they should be rewarded with fabulous wealth. Forcing consumers to buy a music CD for more than P400 bucks is not unlike forcing readers to buy a book for the price of a handwritten scroll. The reason books are relatively cheap is that we now have the Guttenberg press, the equivalent of the digital revolution in its time. The price of books, cheap as they are, already contains the modest reward that goes to authors.

Have you ever wondered why we do not have a similar problem of rampant piracy in books? It's not just the horrific lack of demand for books these days, courtesy of the digital revolution itself, it's also the fact that the cost of pirating a book is not that far off from the cost of buying a book. It's the yawning chasm between the actual cost of producing a CD and its price that causes piracy. Which is why it can never be stopped—that is a lost cause. Might as well bid the waves, also called supply and demand, to hold still.

The other point is how to protect people who create. I agree that the Videogram Board should protect local artists, moviemakers in particular whose movies end up on pirate shelves even before they can be shown. But why should it do the same thing to foreign products? The Videogram Board is paid for by taxpayers' money—our money. Why in hell should I agree that the money that is (forcibly) taken off me with every paycheck should go pay people who devote their energies to protecting Columbia or Tristar, or worse, Bill Gates? That is piracy, and I will not stand for it.

More importantly, in the end, the current anti-piracy tack does not really protect artists, or give them incentives, it discriminates against and retards them. It is not just a lost cause, it is a wrong one. It sees only limit, it does not see possibility. It does not in particular see the mind-boggling possibilities that the digital revolution has opened up. Other countries have, and unless we wake up, we are going to end up again—artistically this time, which has been our few remaining comparative advantages—in the dustbin of history.

Musicians in other countries for one have discovered the utter superfluity of the recording company, and have been producing directly for their market through MP3 offerings in the Internet. Because they are not dependent on producers, they do not have to make compromises in taste, consequently preserving their artistic integrity. For those who do not know it yet, real world music is not to be found in MTV, which is yet another processing plant for homogenous products, it is to be found in the Internet. There is a burst of creativity there that we have not even begun to appreciate. Even if scuttling pirates can be done, what will we end up with? Artists producing formula for an audience that will not watch at a price they will not buy.

None of this even touches on an all-important issue, which are the consequences to knowledge of the anti-piracy campaign. As a friend of mine, Obet Verzola, complained loudly some years ago, what is the Videogram Board doing trying to run after illegal copies of Microsoft in schools? Can you imagine how much the Department of Education would have to spend if it required all public schools to use only original Windows software? Indeed, can you imagine how far our education, which already lags behind other Southeast Asian countries—by a mile, with Singapore—will be set back if we did that?

Which brings me to ask Rosales the same question I asked the entertainers last time: Where did you buy the operating system and word processing program you used to write that very interesting letter in the INQUIRER?

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

East and West can meet but carefully

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE ASIA-EUROPE Foundation celebrated its fifth anniversary on Feb. 15 in Singapore with an assessment of how far it has gone in overcoming the imperialist notion of Rudyard Kipling that "East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet."

In its declaration, Asef dared to contradict Kipling, the unregenerate ideologue of late 19th-century British imperialism, saying "we believe in the contrary." Asef is an association composed of leaders of Asian and European countries designed to promote "people-to-people contact, intellectual linkages and cultural exchanges between Asia and Europe."

This year the executive leadership of Asef was handed over to a European, former Spanish Ambassador to Manila Delfin Colome, from Tommy Koh, Singapore's former ambassador to Washington. The changing of the guard offered a change of perspective in Asef's executive leadership from Asian to European.

More specifically, I would like to think that Colome's directorship stamps a Hispanic outlook on Asef, and therefore a cultural flavor with which Filipinos are more familiar than other Asians. His insertion in Asef's headquarters should therefore be seen as making Asians more aware of Hispanic culture which made its presence felt only in the Philippines in the 16th century colonization of Asia, making it the odd man out in Asia whose template of cultures ranges from Buddhism and Confucianism to Islam.

The cultural highlight of the anniversary was a concert at the lawn of the elegant colonial headquarters of Asef on Nassim Hill. In that Asia-Europe concert, Colome, an ardent student of Beethoven, conducted the joint performance of the Pasir Ris secondary school, Ruan ensemble (a traditional Chinese orchestra) and the Empora Chamber Orchestra from Catalonia. One would think that the combination would result in a cacophony of sounds, but in the framework of a Chinese theme, Colome blended the music of two worlds into a symbolic repudiation of Kipling.

Of course, culture alone cannot close the cultural, economic, social and political gap between Europe and Asia. It took the keynote and only speaker, Pascal Lamy, the European commissioner of trade, to draw a picture of how close and how far Asia and Europe are since the decolonization of Asia following World War II.

Lamy, a Frenchman, recognized that Asef has played an "extremely constructive role in building bridges between Asia and Europe," complementing the government-to-government dialogue of the Asia-Europe Meeting (Asem). It is significant that Asef's headquarters is sited in Singapore, which has acted as a regional trading hub for centuries "where people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds have worked together to achieve such an impressive economic success in the past few decades."

Lamy said that European and Asian economies had become increasingly interlinked, with Asia now accounting for a larger share of European trade than European trade with North America. The Asia-Europe trade, he said, is bound to increase with the push for globalization, but he pointed out that Asia represents more than just a trading partner for Europe. He cited the importance of Europe's enlarging strategic presence in Asia.

He said the key factor for the expanding relationship between Asia and Europe is that "both sides have not only tolerated, but recognized and...appreciated our differences." Diversity, he said, "is clearly a major characteristic of Asia: it contains nearly all the climate zone of the earth, has given rise to and still practices the five major world religions and today it encompasses ideologies from communism to market fundamentalism as well as living standards of a few of the wealthiest to many of the poorest people in the world."

On the other hand, against this background, he said "Asians may often view Europe as a rather homogenous and easily unified western tip of the Eurasian land mass, with the European Union composed of 15 countries speaking 11 different languages and often having more than 15 slightly different ideas of what our policies should be."

He said much of the success which the EU had achieved "is a direct result of diversity...that can be a source of creativity and strength, as long as there is mutual respect for our differences." He pointed out that Europe had taken some 50 years of regionalism to achieve its current level of political and economic cooperation, highlighted by the implementation this year of a single currency, the euro, the main trading cash currency for more than 300 million people. He emphasized that the EU is based on shared values, "as enshrined in our charter of fundamental rights," meaning democracy.

He cautioned Asians to be careful in drawing lessons from Europe, which has evolved its own experience in regionalism since World War II, and pointed out that economic and monetary integration took more than 50 years to develop.

He made a pitch for regionalism rather than multilateralism as a formula for cohesion among nations with diverse cultures, religion and political experiences. He said Asia "is the current laboratory for regionalism." He pointed to trends toward the Asean-China free trade association, which seemed to concentrate on organizing neighborhood relations through elimination of border barriers.

He said globalization "inexorably pushes us toward joint policy responses." He said Asia "is a hotbed of testing different approaches" toward regionalism, but reduced to basics, his message to Asia was: make haste slowly in traveling the road of regional integration.

Taiwan: Looking for a role after 9-11

COMMENTARY

Natalia M.L.M. Morales

KAOHSIUNG—The America Center at the National Sun Yat Sen University in this southern industrial city of Taiwan has been busy the last few months. It just hosted, six months after the terrorist attacks, the conference on American policy in the Asia Pacific in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 tragedy. Scholars and analysts from the region—mainland China, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore as well as those from Taiwan and the United States—had been invited to share their views on what they believe are changes in US policy after what is cryptically referred to as the 9-11 attacks.

The initiative from Taiwan is seen from its being a quiet observer of the surrounding events and a staunch US ally in northeast Asia. Momentarily, it has assumed a much lower profile since the 9-11 attacks have drawn the United States closer to mainland China with the prominence of the sympathy it extended after the tragedy. The United States, in need of the world's moral support in its unprecedented "war against terror," could only commend the support of erstwhile elements of global opposition. Mainland China has been consistently tracking mainstream international politics since winning both the Olympic bid in 2008 and its recent admission to the World Trade Organization. Taiwan, on the other hand, feels it is the lonely daughter of American patriotism since America's loss in the 9-11 tragedy is very much its own—it has to suffer through America's distraction and deviation from the concerns of the Taiwan Strait. This coincides with a downturn in Taiwan's economy. It is experiencing the worst recession in 50 years with a minus one percent economic growth rate and the competition its capital faces in the burgeoning economy of mainland China. Sheng Yang, the director general of the Foreign Service Institute of the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs admitted that traditional exports of garments and electronics in industrial Kaohsiung have given way to high-tech products in the newly built industrial centers of Hsinchu in the north and Tainan in the south. Kaohsiung with its good harbor, has become more of a maritime center shipping Taiwan's products overseas and receiving its huge imports at the same time. The effects of a long-term robust economy is felt even in this period of recession. Despite a much shrunk economy, Taiwan managed to produce a US$320 billion GNP and substantial US$110 billion in foreign exchange during the past year.

Taiwan's quiet support of the United States after the 9-11 tragedy consisted of its generous donation of various forms of relief aid and $1 million to then New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani for recovery operations. The United States did not lose time in expressing its appreciation for the Taiwan government's commitment to democracy and UN resolutions and conventions against terrorism. It is a commitment all the more remarkable because it was made unilaterally. In effect, it is Taiwan's way of looking for and finding a role relevant for itself and its needs at a time when the global equation of forces is drastically changing. In the words of Acting Director Pamela J. Slutz of the American Institute in Taiwan, it is a world where "(w)e will seek to build coalitions, communities and new patterns of cooperation to eliminate the scourge of terrorism and to ensure the security and prosperity of all." It is a world where Taiwan seeks to play a meaningful role even as it continues to follow the initiatives and design of the United States in seeking security in the Taiwan Strait. This is more so in the light of the statement of US National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice that the United States doesn't want to see any unilateral change in the status quo. It is an issue that both sides of the strait need to resolve peacefully. However, the United States has certain obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act to help Taiwan defend itself. These square in with the three cornerstones of President George W. Bush's Taiwan Strait policy—no provocation from either side, peaceful reconciliation and commitment and obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act. By those, Taiwan's search for position in the league of democracies should become more achievable in the view of Prof. Alexander Huang, an assistant professor at Taiwan's Tamkang University.

The scenario of a reunification with mainland China becomes more distant even as the latter has not abandoned its vision of a United China. The traditional reunification party, The Kuomintang Nationalist Party, has been on a gradual decline. The Progress Democratic Party and the People First Party will perhaps supply Taiwan's leadership in the coming years. But both believe in an independent and self-sufficient role for Taiwan in the continuing Northeast Asia dynamic economy.

After security, economy and technology remain the key words for Taiwan's development. Despite the recession, 300 Taiwanese companies continue to operate in the Philippines, according to Sheng. The conference was supposed to include an audience with Taiwan's President Chen Shuibian (which did not take place due to a sudden change in the schedule). The America Center, however, has been able to work out a successful audience with Taipei's Mayor Ma Ying-jeou who, according to some sources, could be the next president of Taiwan. His immediate plan, however, is to seek reelection in December and continue with his efforts in making Taipei a first-rate cybercity. Already, Taipei has received in Adelaide, Australia in the public sector category, an award for being a top cybercity from a field of 15 city competitors. Taipei lays claim to pioneer free e-mail accounts to its citizens that includes a three-hour training course to its cyber citizens. It is in the process of building a metropolitan area network. Among its 900,000 households, 82 percent already has personal computers and 66 percent has Internet access. Bureaucracy-wise, transactions have been maximized. With about 543 application forms for municipal transactions, 109 forms are already transacted online. In recent surveys of the top cities of Asia, Taipei has risen from a lowly No. 21 to overall rank No. 4 and is among the top four in education level per capita.

While the global coalition against terror may not prominently put Taiwan in the forefront, its quiet and sustained role as an ally of democracy and development will reap more rewards for it and the region in due time.

Natalia M.L.M. Morales is a professor of Political Science and International Studies at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

A middle ground

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IS there no choice between absolute prohibition and total legalization of prostitution in our country? Labor Secretary Pat Sto. Tomas got a lot of flak recently when she was quoted as saying that she favored the "legalization" of prostitution. When the media picked up the story thread, the secretary got tons of negative feedback, from Catholic bishops and even women leaders, assailing her for the allegedly "immoral" concept and for supposedly opening the doors to the proliferation of prostitution dens and the possible spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The controversy was diffused somewhat by clarifications that all the labor chief was calling for was a "review" of the legal situation, where prostitution is both "illegal" and yet also "legal."

Reacting to a recent INQUIRER editorial on the issue, Carolina S. Ruiz-Austria, executive director of the Women's Legal Education, Advocacy and Defense Foundation Inc., or Womenlead, a feminist legal defense and advocacy group, points out that under the Revised Penal Code, prostitution is absolutely prohibited. Under the same law, *only women* are considered prostitutes and thus are the only ones committing a crime."

And yet, as Ruiz-Austria points out, "we have the myriad of health ordinances regulating a whole system of pink slips and hygiene clinics (as if the prostituted women were the plague)." If prostitution is a crime, why then have the sex and trafficking industries proliferated so? And why are local governments licensing and regulating the operations of bars, clubs, brothels and other fronts for prostitution?

* * *

THE TEMPEST generated by the erroneous reading of the secretary's position only reflects, I think, the polarity and hypocrisy with which much of society views prostitution. One is either for it or against it, and yet everyone believes there is no eradicating this "problem," having been around since Biblical times.

The legal gray area into which prostitution has fallen has meant that the primary victims of the trade, those who earn the least and yet pay the highest cost among all the players, are set up for even more exploitation and abuse. If only they are the criminals, they are constantly threatened with arrest and are vulnerable to extortion. When clubs or bars are raided, only the women are rounded up and hauled to jail, even if many of them may have been deceived or coerced into the trade, if not abducted by traffickers.

The real profiteers, the club owners, bar managers, pimps and recruiters and the customers, too, get off easy.

Is there a way in which we can protect the women while making sure that prostitution remains a crime? Yes there is, and it's called decriminalization. Ruiz-Austria says: "Decriminalization is a viable option because it not only addresses prostitution as (the) sexual exploitation of persons, focusing on the pimps, procurers and big prostitution industry capitalists and profiteers, but also decriminalizes women in prostitution.

"The policy decriminalizing prostituted persons addresses the stigma and mandates government and society to respond with opportunities for education, training and decent jobs."

Decriminalization would ensure that women in prostitution, who are primarily victims, are not treated as criminals, while ensuring that those who profit from the sex industry and are responsible for the maltreatment and violence against the women, are punished.

* * *

BUT while decriminalization addresses the legal conundrum, there's also need to look into the social and cultural roots of the problem.

The INQUIRER editorial on the issue stated that "prostitution will exist for as long as men (and women, too) have a strong sexual urge and will try to find ways to satisfy it outside the bounds of marriage."

Ruiz-Austria argues: "First of all, wouldn't it be more intelligent to ask why sex only has to happen within marriage anyway? Or why sex even within marriage 'isn't the kind that satisfies the sexual urge'? (Because this is what your statement implies.) Prostitution is a necessity?

"The unacceptability of sex outside the prescribed heterosexual and marital bounds (plus the type of sex: solely procreation) contributes to the reinforcement of what you refer to as prostitution's 'necessity.'"

As long as society believes it is a "normal" man's right to seek sexual gratification whenever and from whomever he needs it, even if it means paying for sexual services, then prostitution will flourish. And as long as the stigma remains focused on the women, then men, who earn both the profit and pleasure from prostitution, will continue to evade responsibility for it.

* * *

RUIZ-AUSTRIA is not about to let the media off so easily, though. The editorial, she points out, "mentioned that sometimes prostituted women are victimized as media victims exposed to public shame when they are arrested and bundled off to the police station.

"Again I have to disagree that only those women who are unceremoniously bundled off (often half-naked before the over eager camera's gaze) are the ones victimized when media undertake their favorite entrapment/bust excursions.

"Look again. Every time media depict prostituted women as criminals, they reinforce the notion that there are only two classes of women in society: the good and the bad.

"This is precisely what stigma is. By not fitting into the norms set by the dominant religion (reinforced by media), the human rights of women in prostitution will never be realized."

So much history yet to be read

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

LAST Wednesday the newly minted director of the National Library, Prudenciana Cruz, took me on a tour of the Filipiniana Division. Aside from more air-conditioning in some areas and Internet stations, I was impressed by the new fire prevention and security systems. While the place has improved physically and the new director is user-friendly, I was depressed that the Rare Books and Documents Division was empty. Since this part of the library has always been a low-traffic area, I consoled myself with the notion that I went there on the wrong day and time. On my way home I couldn't help wondering how part of the Filipino soul was kept in that room waiting to be uncovered and yet people are not breaking down doors to get in. Aren't we interested? Maybe we have few readers because much of the material is in Spanish? The bottom line is how to get more people to visit the National Library, the National Archives, the National Museum and the National Historical Institute.

If I had another lifetime I would go through the PRR or Philippine Revolutionary Records (once known as the PIR or Philippine Insurgent Records). There are boxes upon boxes containing close to a million documents on the Philippine Revolution and the Filipino-American War screaming to be used, but due to traffic and middle age I usually consult the five-volume compilation of documents titled "The Philippine Insurrection Against the United States" by J.R.M. Taylor. This reference work is usually the first step in my research and if I need more, I can consult the original manuscripts in the original languages in the National Library.

For example, Leoncio Alarilla, captain of guerrillas, writing from Tarlac in February 1900 says:

"I am now carrying out a scheme here in this town for the purpose of killing some American sentries, whose bodies will be buried in the woods near the town, where they cannot be traced and found by their comrades, in order to avoid any investigation by them. They will believe that these soldiers have deserted. I have just sent to Gerona for a supply of wine, which, mixed with a strong sickening stuff, will be sold to them; once they drink of it, the effect will soon tell on them, and then we will seize their rifles."

What was this mixture? Was it a laxative? Was it like a modern-day Ativan used by hoodlums on tourists? Speaking of poisons, R. F. Santos, writing in Albay in October 1900, ordered the militia of barrios Apud, Panao and Macabugos:

"...To have all the soldiers of their respected companies provide themselves with at least fifty [50] arrows apiece and a sufficient quantity of that well-known poison called *dita* to apply to the points of the arrows, and to have their bolos well sharpened. I must remind you that as repeated practice is essential in order to secure the best results in the use of these weapons, you will endeavor to at least twice a week, according to the convenience of the residents, (to have) said exercises take place in secluded spots, far from all danger of being surprised by the enemy. No moral or physical coercion is to be resorted to in complying with this order, but only courtesy and prudence are to be employed, as in these times a conciliatory policy is the only one that should obtain.

"For the purposes indicated above you will likewise order that all the residents of your respective barrios have ready in a safe place a supply of the fruit commonly called *Ydioc*, putting it in water to decay, and to also have in readiness a squirt gun, that is to say *sumpit*, in order to use it in case of any invasion or attack of the enemy."

Imagine, Pinoys fighting the enemy with blowguns? These documents give us a glimpse into the times. From the notebook of Juan Cailles in Laguna we have this bit of news dated September 1900:

"This morning at 8 o'clock...your coachman told them that the traitor [Salvador Reyes] was proceeding to the northern part of the town. They [Lazaro Alfonso and Modesto de los Reyes] followed him and upon coming to the front of the house and shop of Cabezang Jacinto Talcon, the aforementioned Sr. Modesto attacked him with a bolo like a tiger, with all the strength of his body and soul, hitting by chance his left jaw, when the other, that is to say, Sr. Lazaro Alfonso followed the first, catching the tràitor by the throat with his right hand and with the other fired three pistol shots at him, one of which missed and the other two took effect in the traitor's shoulder, from the effects of which he fell like a stone upon his face. Lastly, Sr. Modesto stabbed him with a bolo and upon seeing that he was dead, took away his revolver and carrying the traitor by his belt, to Calle de Maria Christina, threw the body down. This was done in plain daylight and in view of everybody."

The above shows that the assassins were amateurs, but how important is this event in the yet unwritten history of Laguna? By themselves these documents are trivial but in the larger context of our history all these stories gain meaning. All I have read are disjointed bits of information. When and how I will string everything together in one coherent narrative is the unresolved dream of my life.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

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Held hostage by Comelec infighting

WHILE I laud the efforts of Speaker Jose de Venecia, Sen. Edgardo Angara and the other leaders of the 10 political parties who met with the feuding Commission on Elections officials in their attempt to restore order to the "notorious infighting" in the poll body, I cannot help but be dismayed over the actuations of the poll executives involved that required this extraordinary effort in solving the Comelec mess.

As an ordinary government employee, I am consistently reminded to hold the "exigency of public service" above and beyond any other principle or rationale, including any other feelings or ill will that I may harbor toward my colleagues or superiors.

I do not understand what makes these Comelec officials think that they are above this time-honored precept. Has their lofty status addled their brains so much that they'd rather pursue vicious back-stabbing among themselves than pursue the modernization or computerization process and the preparations for the forthcoming Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections? Have they completely forgotten that they have been appointed to their positions to ensure that the Comelec does its job? Angara got it right by saying that if we don't have a working Comelec, we will not have a working democracy. Yet, we find these poll executives holding our country and our democracy hostage with their antics.

I lament the loss of the ideals which made up the bulwark of government service. Gone are the days when one's values and principles were harnessed for the good of the many. Now, we hear terms such as "non-negotiable," "my right," "my principle," "my belief"—forgetting that all these don't matter in public service, not when you are confronted with the fact that your pride or welfare is nothing compared to the pride or welfare of the public.

LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Private companies always tell their errant employees to "shape up or ship out." It's a pity that we cannot do the same to these public servants fomenting trouble and dissent instead of encouraging compromise and mutual respect.

—ERIC F. SILVA, 54 K-3rd St., Kamuning, Quezon City

Arrogant flaunting of power

THE OTHER day at around 9 a.m., my daughter and her husband were approaching the San Fernando exit of the North Luzon Expressway. Suddenly, all the cars were stopped to make way for a convoy, with sirens wailing. The convoy included three vans, one of which was a Hi-Ace and another a Hyundai. These three vehicles had no plate numbers. They were escorted by a Philippine National Police car with plate number SST902.

The convoy just breezed through the toll gates without paying any toll.

What gives these people the right to block the path of other cars so that they would not be delayed? Why did the vans not have license plates? Were they on a legal mission?

I hope that the authorities will look into this blatant abuse of power.

—CARMEN TRIO, Parañaque City

Outrageous comparison between Erap and the poor

JESUS Crispin Remulla of the Partido ng Masang Pilipino (PMP) is right when he says that the country's justice system is seriously flawed and that it has a generally anti-poor and anti-people orientation. To many of the poor and the disenfranchised, this allegation is not at all an exaggeration.

But when Remulla begins to go into how these flaws have become more evident because of how former President Joseph Estrada is being treated by the judiciary, he sounds ridiculous.

The parallel Remulla draws between Estrada's situation and how the poor are treated under our justice system is outrageous. Estrada has stolen billions of pesos, bought cars and mansions galore and can utilize the services of all the lawyers his ill-gotten wealth can get for him. Estrada is the one making a mockery of the justice system, despite the fact that the system has been bending over backwards to accommodate him even at the expense of the Filipino people's demand for justice.

It's an outrage that the leaders of the land are considering options that will allow Estrada to escape justice. The House resolution calling for the exile of the former president was worse than the one supporting Estrada's bid to go abroad for knee surgery.

In the meantime, Estrada's denial that he wants to go into exile was yet another trick to win public sympathy. Exile is not an option, and he shouldn't even be thinking about it. He is trying to raise the stakes and haggle for compromises, the least being a respite from his incarceration via a trip abroad for surgery, and the ultimate being an acquittal from the plunder charges on the one hand, and conviction on the less serious charges such as the use of illegal alias.

The Filipino public should be made aware and warned against the Estrada camp's attempts to throw a monkey wrench into the entire judicial process with Estrada's ridiculous claim that he is being denied due process. It's obvious that the objective is to put the Sandiganbayan, the Supreme Court and ultimately the Macapagal administration on the defensive. Estrada, his legal advisers and propagandists want to lay the ground for questioning his looming conviction by charging that he cannot obtain justice in our courts.

A conspiracy could be in the works to ensure that he escapes justice either through exile, or through acquittal. The administration itself is wracked by doubts as to how to address the Estrada problem: it's not farfetched that it will embrace the most despicable options just so it can achieve a resolution. The people should be watchful and look out for secret agreements between the Estradas and the Macapagal administration or unprincipled compromises that will result in Estrada's exoneration.

If the nation's leaders are sincere in pursuing justice and upholding human rights, they should push for a speedy trial and conviction, instead of debating which would be better for Estrada—exile or just a furlough abroad. To let Estrada leave the country under any pretext or, worse, letting him go into exile would be a grand betrayal of public trust.

The administration has acted so slowly, indecisively and in such a compromising manner that Estrada and his minions have been able to win many concessions and are thus gaining confidence that they will triumph over justice.

—RUDY Q. CORRO JR., chief of staff, Office of Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin B. Beltran, South Wing, Rm. 617, House of Representatives, Batasan Hills, Quezon City

LRT extension will serve Las Piñas

PLEASE allow us to respond to the letter of Ronald Vergara (PDI, 3/7/02) who appealed to the government to let the planned Light Rail Transit (LRT) system from Baclaran to Bacoor, Cavite, pass through Las Piñas to benefit residents in that city.

We are happy to inform Vergara and Las Piñas residents that the rail system will pass through Las Piñas City. As a matter of fact, three of the proposed 10 stations of the rail project will be in Manuyo Uno, Las Piñas and Zapote.

Once the rail system is operational, it will be a continuous ride from Niog in Bacoor (passing through Las Piñas and Parañaque) to Monumento in Caloocan City and vice versa. If one intends to go to Quezon City through Edsa, he can transfer to the Metro Rail Transit station in Edsa-Taft using the connecting passenger bridge, which is now under construction.

Phase 2 of the project will extend the rail system from Niog to Imus, and Phase 3 from Imus to Dasmariñas, Cavite.

We are fast-tracking the Baclaran-Bacoor LRT so that commuters will no longer suffer from the traffic and thereby make traveling more convenient, fast and safe.

—TEODORO B. CRUZ JR., administrator, Light Rail Transit Authority, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City

Before raising SSS contributions

BEFORE THE SOCIAL Security System pushes through with its plan to increase employees' and employers' contribution, an independent body should be created to study its finances from the administration of former President Marcos to the present administration. Emphasis should be laid on the amount of money used by the successive administrations in buttressing government finances; bad and questionable loans and investments; inordinately high salaries, bonuses, gifts, etc. to SSS executives and key personnel (including favored private individuals and groups). It will be recalled that the funds of the SSS belong to its members and are held in trust.

Saying that the funds of the SSS will run out in 2015 to a point where it can no longer service the needs of its members, is like casting someone adrift in the ocean after robbing him of his meager savings! By any standard, this act is cruel and condemnable.

We would like to know how much of our money was stolen, squandered and wasted before we agree to any increase in monthly contributions to the SSS. Retirees would also want to know if the pittance that they receive monthly could have been reasonably increased over the years if care was exercised in the handling of their retirement funds.

Is this asking too much?

As a postscript, shouldn't the malefactors be punished for their misdeeds? Again, is this asking too much?

—APOLONIO G. RAMOS, 43 Mindanao St., Marikina City

Barangay folk did the right thing

I WOULD like to express my opinion about the 5-ton whale that was beached last Feb. 14, 2002 in Barangay Laurenti in San Pascual, Masbate.

I congratulate the residents of Barangay Laurenti because it was humane of them to try to return the whale to deeper waters. This is the first time that I heard of a whale that was not butchered immediately after being caught. It means that people are now more aware of the need to help in the campaign to save the endangered species. But what they forgot to do was inform the regional office of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. They should have informed someone from the BFAR immediately to bring the equipment needed in returning the whale to the deep.

Likewise, a fish capture specialist should have been summoned to guide the residents in the correct and effective way to bring the whale back to the deep. In our world where mass extinction happens too easily and too often, nonetheless, they did the right thing.

—DIANA DE GUZMAN, 14 San Juan St., Cainta, Rizal

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush: All options open for US use of nuke arms

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush said Wednesday that all options were open for the use of the US nuclear arsenal to deter hostile nations from threatening the United States or its allies.

"First of all we have got all options on the table," Bush told a White House news conference, "because we want to make it very clear to nations that you will not threaten the United States or use weapons of mass destruction against us or our allies or friends."

Bush was responding to a question about reports that the US administration had ordered the Pentagon to draw up contingency plans for the use of nuclear weapons against a wide range of countries.

According to media reports, China, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea and Syria were named as potential targets for US nuclear strikes.

The reports sparked concern abroad that Washington was adopting a more aggressive nuclear policy. Bush, however, insisted that US nuclear weapons were for deterrence only.

He said "the reason we have a nuclear arsenal that I hope is modern, upgraded and can work is to deter attacks on America."

Specifically addressing the Nuclear Policy Review, a top secret document presented to Congress in January, and leaked to some newspapers recently, Bush insisted that it contained nothing new.

"Well, first of all the nuclear review is not new," he said. "It's gone on from previous administrations."

According to media reports, the Nuclear Policy Review calls for a shift away from the Cold-War posture of using the US nuclear arsenal to deter a nuclear strike from the former Soviet Union.

According to press reports, the review identifies new contingencies in which US nuclear weapons might be used, specifically "an Iraqi attack on Israel or its neighbors, or a North Korean attack on South Korea, or a military confrontation over the Taiwan Strait."

Top US officials including Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell have all denied that the review recommends new targeting of nuclear weapons and have referred to it as no more than prudent and routine forward planning.

Bush declined to comment on reports that the review discusses the development of a new generation of smaller nuclear weapons that could destroy bunkers containing stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction hidden underground by hostile powers. ***AFP***

N. Korea threatens to pull out of crucial nuclear deal

SEOUL—North Korea responded on Thursday to a US nuclear review by threatening to pull out of a crucial deal with United States that froze Pyongyang's suspected atomic weapons program and averted near-conflict in the 1990s.

Even before news broke in US newspapers last weekend that Washington was reviewing its nuclear strategy, North Korea was smarting because President George W. Bush had labeled it part of an "axis of evil" bent on making weapons of mass destruction.

On Wednesday, the official news agency KCNA said Pyongyang would react strongly to the nuclear arms review that US newspapers say includes contingency plans for using atomic weapons against seven countries including the communist North.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry sharpened the focus on Thursday by issuing a statement saying the US nuclear review was "a daydream of reckless persons."

"Under the present situation where nuclear lunatics have taken office in the White House, we are compelled to examine all the agreements with the US," said the statement issued by KCNA.

"In case the US plan for a nuclear attack on the DPRK turns out to be true, the DPRK will have no option but to take a substantial countermeasure against it, not bound to any DPRK-US agreement," the ministry said.

DPRK is the acronym for the country's official title—the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Pyongyang's suspected nuclear weapons program brought it to the brink of conflict with Washington in 1994, before a diplomatic deal known as the Agreed Framework was struck to freeze the program in exchange for oil supplies and special Western-built light-water nuclear reactors. ***Reuters***

Allied troops search for al-Qaida fighters

SHAH-E-KOT, Afghanistan—US Marine helicopter gunships blasted cave entrances in the rugged mountains, seeking to stop al-Qaida and Taliban fighters from escaping after US and Afghan troops seized control of this valley.

Afghan commanders said many al-Qaida and Taliban fighters—including their commander, Saif Rahman Mansour—got away before Afghan troops overran three villages and a commanding ridgeline early Wednesday.

US officials said they were holding about 20 prisoners who were being interrogated.

Pentagon officials had repeatedly said the only choice facing the enemy troops was to "surrender or die," although Afghan commanders had been prepared to allow them to leave.

A US officer estimated that 500 al-Qaida fighters were killed in the 12-day offensive in eastern Afghanistan. But Afghan troops said they found only 25 bodies in the initial sweep of the area. Others may be buried in caves that collapsed during the bombing.

Leading the final assault were Afghan commanders Zia Lodin and Gul Haider, who had floated the idea of a negotiated exit.

"They're trying to slip away," one Afghan commander, Mohammed Qasim, said of the al-Qaida and Taliban fighters. "They're going in different directions in the mountains" toward Pakistan, he said.

In an attempt to block their escape, US helicopter gunships, including Marine Cobras, blasted cave entrances Wednesday with rocket and machinegun fire.

About 500 Canadian troops landed high in the snow-capped mountains to search for al-Qaida fugitives. US helicopters that brought them in flew close to the jagged terrain to avoid possible enemy fire. ***AP***

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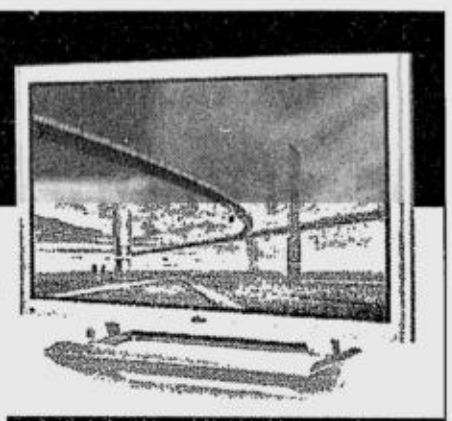
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US says Israel actions 'not helpful' to truce

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush rebuked the Israeli government on Wednesday for its military operations in the West Bank, saying they were "not helpful" to the task of setting the scene for a truce.

"Frankly, it's not helpful what the Israelis have recently done, in order to create conditions for peace. I understand someone trying to defend themselves and to fight terror, but the recent actions aren't helpful," he told a news conference.

Israel pulled some 40 tanks out of the occupied West Bank town of Ramallah early Thursday after the Bush rebuke, Palestinian security sources said.

Some 30 tanks left their positions and moved east of the self-rule town overnight, while earlier another 10 exited travelling toward the north, the sources said.

Some 60 tanks are still estimated to be inside Ramallah in the third day of Israel's largest military campaign in the region in 35 years.

Bush's Middle East envoy, retired Marine Corps Gen. Anthony Zinni, left Washington soon after Bush spoke, en route for Jerusalem to resume mediation between Israel and the Palestinians after the worst violence in months of conflict.

Bush said Zinni's task was to persuade the two sides to start work on a ceasefire plan drafted by CIA Director George Tenet last year but held in abeyance by the violence.

"Zinni's job is to go over there and to work to get conditions such that we can get into Tenet. And he's got a lot of work to do, but if I didn't think he could make progress, I wouldn't have asked him to go," said Bush.

The United States told Israel earlier on Wednesday that Israeli military operations which kill Palestinian civilians could undercut Zinni's ceasefire efforts.

The US ambassador to Israel, Dan Kurtzer, met Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Jerusalem and a senior state department official said the United States wanted Israeli forces to pull back by the time Zinni arrives.

"We're looking for immediate positive steps from both sides, for (Palestinian President Yasser) Arafat to take action against (militant) groups and for the Israelis to pull back from their incursions," said the official, who asked not to be named. "Immediate" means by Zinni's arrival, he added.

Over the past 48 hours US Secretary of State Colin Powell has discussed the Middle East violence by telephone with the foreign ministers of Egypt, Germany, Israel and Norway—Ahmed Maher, Joschka Fischer, Shimon Peres and Jan Petersen, a state department official said.

Zinni is expected in Jerusalem on Thursday afternoon for his third mediation mission. He left the region in January without much to show for his efforts.

His return marks a change in tack for the Bush administration, which has tried to stay out of mediation between Israel and the Palestinians.

It showed its new approach on Tuesday night when it sponsored a UN Security Council resolution "affirming a vision" of a Palestinian state alongside Israel.

The balance of US rhetoric has shifted in recent days from putting the onus on Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to more emphasis on the need for Israeli restraint.

In another sign of impatience with Sharon, the Bush administration is blocking a request from Israel for hundreds of millions of dollars in new aid, administration and congressional sources said on Wednesday. ***Reuters, AFP***

BRITISH QUEEN'S GRANDDAUGHTER REUTERS

The granddaughter of Britain's Queen Elizabeth, Zara Phillips watches as her boyfriend, jockey Richard Johnson, celebrates victory on Flagship Uberalles after winning the Queen Mother's Champion Steeplechase at the Cheltenham festival March 13.

'We're going to deal with' Saddam–Bush

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush said on Wednesday that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is a problem and "we are going to deal with him," but stopped short of saying the United States would take action against Iraq.

Bush did not rule out unilateral action against Iraq, saying "all options are on the table," as Vice President Dick Cheney tours the Middle East looking for support against Baghdad.

How to deal with Iraq has been a subject of internal debate within the Bush administration, with some advisers wanting quick action and others fearing a unilateral move would damage US relations with the Arab world.

Bush has included Iraq on his "axis of evil" nations, along with Iran and North Korea, as countries that must be stopped from developing weapons of mass destruction.

"I am deeply concerned about Iraq," Bush told a White House news conference. "This is a nation run by a man who is willing to kill his own people by using chemical weapons, a man who won't let inspectors into the country, a man who's obviously got something to hide.

"And he is a problem and we're going to deal with him," Bush said. "But the first stage is to consult with our allies and friends and that is exactly what we're doing.

Bush said Cheney, on his tour, was "reminding people about this danger and that we need to work in concert to confront this danger."

"One thing I will not allow is a nation such as Iraq to threaten our very future by developing weapons of mass destruction," Bush said.

Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern, who had lunch with Bush earlier in the day, said the US president made clear he is not planning immediate military action against Iraq. ***Reuters***

Jakarta opens first trials on orgy of murder in Timor

JAKARTA—Indonesia opened its first trials on Thursday linked to violence that swept East Timor in 1999, trying to convince a skeptical international community those responsible for the carnage will be held accountable.

The trials of 18 suspects, including three generals, have been plagued by frequent delays and widespread doubts that justice would be served after the orgy of murder surrounding East Timor's vote to break from Jakarta's rule in August 1999.

"I am personally not optimistic with the process because there are a number of flaws already," Hendardi, head of the Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association, said.

He said one of those was the failure of authorities to put Indonesia's military chief at the time, Wiranto, on trial.

The first defendants to take the stand in separate but packed hearings of the special human rights court on Thursday were the territory's ex-police chief Gen. Timbul Silaen, and Abilio Soares, former governor of East Timor.

Five other suspects, all military members, face trial on March 19, while no date has been set yet in the cases of the remaining 11 suspects.

A court spokesperson has said Silaen and Soares had been charged with crimes against humanity in connection with four incidents, including the massacre of East Timorese refugees in a church in September 1999.

There has been confusion over the maximum penalty they face.

Silaen made few remarks while Soares made no comment before entering the courtroom.

Outside, around 70 supporters of the Indonesian military, including women and children, protested the trials. Some of the men were bare-chested and had their faces painted red and white, the color of Indonesia's national flag.

"Stop this cruel trial," read one banner.

A lawyer from the defense team representing all 18 suspects has said none were guilty of any of the charges. ***Reuters***

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Light therapy makes inroads against cancer of pancreas

PARIS—A ground-breaking therapy that delivers targeted beams of brilliant light into the abdomen has made inroads against cancer of the pancreas, a notoriously hard-to-treat illness that kills 90 percent of its victims within a year.

The experimental treatment shrank the tumor and increased the lifespan of many of the patients who were given it, the specialist British journal Gut reported Thursday.

Sixteen patients with advanced, inoperable pancreatic cancer were first injected with a chemical, meso-tetrahydroxyphenyl, that made their cells highly sensitive to light.

Three days later, doctors inserted six fiber-optic needles through the abdominal skin that pointed directly at the tumor. They then beamed a diode laser down the needles, with the goal of killing the sensitized cancer cells with intense red light.

Most of the patients had large tumors, but in each case the treatment caused the cancer to shrink. Almost half were still alive one year later, two survived two years, and one patient managed 30 months.

These results were far better than would be expected for pancreatic cancer, which is one of the most difficult cancers to treat because the pancreas is near major arteries and organs and plays a vital role in body functions.

It is one of the top 10 leading causes of death from cancer worldwide, and most people diagnosed with the disease usually die within six and 10 months.

The therapy was devised by University College Hospital doctors in London led by Stephen Brown, a professor at the hospital's National Medical Laser Center.

Although this so-called photodynamic therapy is not a cure, it is highly encouraging, especially for patients who are too frail for surgery, the authors said.

None of the patients suffered serious side-effects from the treatment, which meant that they were strong enough to undergo additional chemotherapy or radiotherapy, and had a good quality of life.

"There was no treatment-related mortality, most patients were out of hospital in less than 10 days after treatment, and morbidity was considerably less than would be expected after surgery," the authors said.

The light-sensitizing chemical used in the treatment spreads to normal cells as well as to tumor cells. ***AFP***

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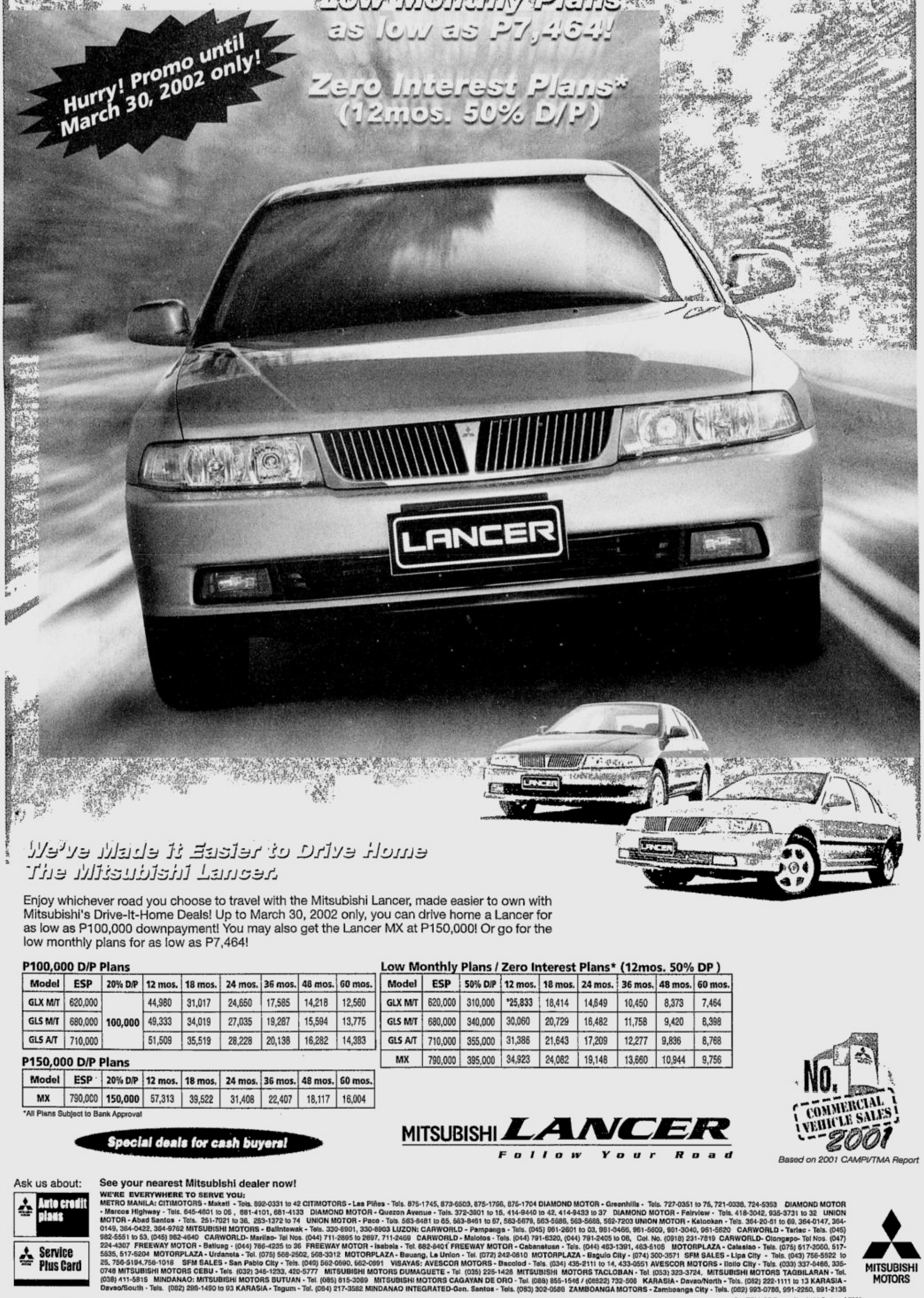

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GLS A/T	710,000		51,509	35,519	28,228	20,138	16,282	14,383

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GLS A/T	710,000	355,000	31,386	21,643	17,209	12,277	9,836	8,768
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Ruling triggers India turmoil

AHMEDABAD, India—Several thousand Hindu tribesmen attacked and burned Muslim homes in a fresh outbreak of sectarian violence in the western state of Gujarat, police said Thursday.

Around 2,000 Hindus attacked the Muslim village of Kavant in Vadodara district, around 200 km south of Gujarat's commercial capital Ahmedabad, on Wednesday afternoon.

"They were armed with bows and arrows and began looting and burning shops and homes," said police sub-inspector R.S. Solanki, adding that there were no reports of any casualties.

Many Muslim families had already fled Kavant a week ago in the wake of the worst sectarian violence to hit India in nearly a decade that claimed 700 iives across Gujarat.

Riots

The riots, triggered by a Feb. 27 attack on a train carrying Hindu activists, were quelled by the deployment of federal troops, but stray incidents such as the looting in Kavant have continued to fuel Hindu-Muslim tensions.

Amid fears of more religious violence, India's Supreme Court ruled Wednesday that Hindu nationalists could not hold prayers near the site of a razed mosque in a northern city.

A Hindu fundamentalist leader said he would defy security forces and go ahead with the ceremony Friday in Ayodhya, a flashpoint of religious tension in the nation of more than 1 billion people.

Mosque

Angering many Hindus, India's dominant religious group, the three-member Supreme Court ruled that no religious ceremonies would be allowed near the place where the 16th century Babri mosque once stood.

The mosque, which was destroyed by Hindu militants in 1992, stood on a place where Hindus believe their principal god Rama was born.

Some 12,000 police and paramilitary troops have deployed in Ayodhya to prevent violence, but some Hindu fundamentalists said they were determined to hold prayers and dedicate pillars for a proposed temple near the mosque.

Ramchandra Das, a Hindu priest and chair of a trust set up to build the temple, said in Ayodhya that reprisals similar to those in Gujarat might ensue if his worshippers are attacked.

The World Hindu Council, which has spearheaded the campaign to construct a temple at the mosque site, called the ruling a blow to India's dominant religion, but did not indicate whether the ceremony would go ahead on Friday. ***AP***

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PROPAGANDA TOOLS

Ex-hostages appeal: 'Leave us alone'

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Two former Abu Sayyaf hostages said they wanted a respite from appearing in the government's propaganda against the bandit group.

Nurse Reina Malonzo, 23, and midwife Shiela Tabuñag said they were already exhausted by their public appearances aimed at boosting the government's anti-Abu Sayyaf campaign.

"All I need is peace of mind, privacy, adjustment and security from threats," Malonzo said in *Chavacano*.

Tabuñag said sometimes, military officials could even become insensitive.

"*Sinabihan ako na mas gusto ko pa sa* Abu Sayyaf *kesa dito, napaiyak ako kasi hindi naman nila alam kung ano talaga ang naranasan namin sa bundok* (They told me that I prefer to be with the Abu Sayyaf than be here. I cried because they really don't know what we went through in the mountains)," Tabuñag said.

Also, Malonzo and Tabuñag decried the military's claim that they were still suffering from the Stockholm syndrome.

"As if we are ignorant, do they know that we are medical personnel and that we are aware of this syndrome? How insensitive of them," Malonzo said.

They also repeated their earlier pronouncement that they were not rescued from the Abu Sayyaf.

"We were never rescued, not even Joel Guillo, he just followed his guts and instinct, that's why he was freed," Malonzo said.

As this developed, an official of a nongovernment organization said it was becoming clear that the government was exploiting former Abu Sayyaf captives.

Amirah Ali Lidasan, secretary general of the Moro Christian People's Alliance, said the exploitation could be considered "one grave abuse of women's rights."

Lidasan told the INQUIRER that it is only right for the government to leave the hostages alone "while they are still on the stage of trying to heal their trauma (from their experience)."

Basilan Rep. Gerry Salapuddin agreed, saying what the former hostages need was less unnecessary exposure.

He said public exposures during government anti-Abu Sayyaf campaign could endanger the lives of the former captives.

"The government and even the media should give them space for adjustment. Let them live in peace and privacy." Salapuddin told the INQUIRER. ***Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Davao makes Guinness bid for biggest durian bar

DAVAO CITY—This city is posing a challenge to top durian fruit producer Thailand as food processors here on March 16 will bat for an entry in the Guinness Book of World Records for producing the world's biggest durian bar.

The biggest durian bar is the first ever in the world that even people at Guinness do not even know what it is and have to ask for pictures of the durian fruit, it being the major ingredient of the candy.

The durian bar, which will weigh about 200 kilos, is about six meters long and a meter wide. It will use 100 kilos of durian puree (or 125 pieces of durian fruit), 115 cans of cream, 50 kilos of buttermilk, three sacks of sugar and other ingredients that would perk up its taste.

Dorothy Isa Du, president of the Food Processors Association of Davao City, Inc. (FPAD), said the durian bar will be prepared by the city's top durian candy-makers—Lola Abons, Minco, La Ecijana and Sirawan—at the Durian Park here on March 16 starting at 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Display

The durian bar will be displayed for public viewing from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. There will be a ceremonial unwrapping.

Du said the idea of coming up with the biggest durian bar came up during the output planning of the association last month.

"It was one of the outputs that we came up with to help give a positive image of Davao City. Let's not focus on killings alone. Let's have this for a change," Du said.

The general concept of the activity, Du said, was to make Davao City the record holder of the World's Biggest Durian Bar, which will be wrapped and labeled like the usual Durian Bar.

After the exhibit, the FPAD will cut the bar up to 600 slices (20 cm x 5 cm) and these will be sold at P50 each.

The slice is a little bigger than the average bar (10 cm x 5 cm) sold in the market.

Du said the proceeds of the sale would go to Maharlika Foundation through the Rotary Club 2000.

Cataract

Du, a Rotarian herself, said FPAD has selected Maharlika as the beneficiary of the project because it helps treat tribal people with cataracts.

"The lumads are the people that we need to help. And there is really a dramatic result after the operation. This is also community service on our part," Du said.

Bernie Alejandro, vice president for research and development of FPAD, said the activity would pose a greater challenge to Thailand and Malaysia, which are the two biggest competitors of Davao durian growers in terms of production.

Alejandro said Thailand has been claiming to be the top durian producer in the world with Singapore as its biggest market.

He added that FPAD hopes to get positive results from the durian bar fete in terms of government support. ***Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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Judge threatens 4 journalists with contempt

By Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Four female journalists of a local paper are scheduled to appear before a regional trial court judge today to explain why they should not be cited for indirect contempt for printing an article linking him to an alleged bribe attempt.

RTC Judge Fortunato de Gracia has charged three editors and a reporter of the Cebu Daily News (CDN) with indirect contempt after he felt maligned by the paper's front-page article titled "Judge bribed?" on Feb. 28.

The hearing of the indirect contempt charges is set at around 2 p.m. today. Expected to appear are CDN publisher Eileen Mangubat, editor in chief Thea Riñen, news editor Piedad Gonzalez and reporter Suzzane Salva. They are represented by lawyer Maria Jane Paredes, a former broadcast journalist.

This is the first time that an RTC judge in Cebu has charged three top editors and a reporter of a local paper with indirect contempt.

MANGUBAT

RIÑEN

GONZALES

If convicted, the four journalists face a maximum fine of P30,000 or a six-month jail term or both, depending on the discretion of the judge.

De Gracia took offense on the article that quoted the testimony of Assistant City Prosecutor Mary Ann Castro before the Office of the Ombudsman-Visayas, where she alleged that a lawyer boasted to her that he had already approached De Gracia regarding an illegal drugs case against three suspected members of the Hong Kong Triad.

In his order, De Gracia said the article besmirched his reputation and made him suffer sleepless nights, loss of appetite and weight loss.

But the CDN journalists maintained that they should not be cited in indirect contempt for publishing a "fair and true report of an official proceeding, which is not confidential in nature."

In her 16-page comment, Paredes said the news article was not "contumacious" because it fell under the category of qualified privileged communication, which is protected by the Constitution.

She said the article was derived from the statements of Castro made during an inquiry by the Office of the Ombudsman-Visayas on the alleged bribery attempt at the City Prosecutor's Office.

Castro is among the three prosecutors assigned to handle the illegal drugs case filed against three suspected members of the Hong Kong triad before De Gracia's sala.

She claimed that lawyer Gines Abellana gave her P10,000 in exchange for going easy on the motion for bail filed by the accused.

During the Feb. 27 inquiry, the CDN quoted Castro as saying that Abellana urged her to accept an envelope containing the money as he had allegedly approached De Gracia over the matter.

"*Ingon siya share na nimo kay ako paingon sa judge* (He told me that it was my share and that he was on his way to the judge," the CDN quoted Castro as saying during the inquiry.

"The respondents did not raise the question of whether there was indeed an alleged bribery attempt or of whether there was an attempt to bribe him. Castro's sworn statements did," Paredes said.

She also pointed out that Castro's testimony was a matter of public record and is open for public scrutiny considering that the Triad case was a high-profile case in Cebu.

Paredes also said that the judge would violate the freedom of the press if the four journalists would be cited in contempt.

She said contempt would constitute "subsequent punishment" prohibited under the Constitution, which provides that no law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech or expression or of the press.

A judge handling high-profile cases should not be "ultra-sensitive" to reports and comments from the public "whom they profess to serve," said Paredes.

She said the judges' decisions and actuation are laden with public interest because of the position they hold.

Paredes noted that De Gracia's integrity remained intact because the accused in the case had expressed full confidence in him.

". . . One does not expect a judge to decide on a case based on consideration of friendship, or social or family ties but rather on the basis of the evidence before him, in the same manner that a journalist, worthy of his calling, makes his report in the most objective manner possible," she said.

Thieves target docs' clinics

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Police investigators are looking at an "inside job" angle and the possibility of a syndicate moving to this city to be behind the Sunday robbery of 10 clinics at St. Paul's Hospital here.

Stolen were some P200,000 worth of hospital equipment, cash and gift checks, including two Doppler machines, which are used to detect heartbeats of babies in the mothers' wombs, ECG machines and an opthalmoscope.

The clinics are located at the Pere Louis Chauvet Complex or at the new wing of the hospital, right above the new emergency room.

Chief Insp. Dionisio Duco, Iloilo City Precinct 1 chief, said the heist could have happened about 7 p.m. on Sunday, despite the presence of five security guards at the hospital premises.

He said the police found clues indicating that the culprits were either familiar with the place, or were part of an organized group.

This group, he added, was believed to be from Manila, which occasionally swoops down on offices and establishments in the provinces.

Duco said officials at the airport, piers and bus terminals in Iloilo City were already informed of the robbery. Owners of shops selling medical equipment were also asked to report to police agents or vendors of medical equipment that are similar to those taken from the clinics.

Police investigators said they suspected that the robbers had duplicate keys and lock picks to gain entry into the clinics. Once inside, they swipe with plastic cards the doorknobs leading to the examination room of the physicians, the police said.

Locks of filing cabinets were destroyed but nothing was found missing. "It appears that the culprits knew where to look for valuables," said Duco.

The INQUIRER tried to talk to hospital officials but Sr. Norma Mansano, administrative officer of St. Paul Hospital, refused to speak with media.

GRACE ALBASIN

HOMELESS MONTH
As the country celebrates Women's Month, hundreds of Filipino women are driven out of slums into the streets, just like these women who were ejected from their homes in Sta. Cruz, Puntod in Cagayan de Oro City.

MILF rebs attack mining personnel, kill 2, injure 1

PAGADIAN CITY—Two people were killed, while another was injured, after suspected Moro Islamic Liberation Front rebels attacked personnel of a foreign-owned mining company on Km. 8, Barangay Kilalaban in Baliguian, Zamboanga del Norte, at around 10:30 Wednesday morning.

Brig. Gen. Angel Atutubo, deputy commander of the Army's 1st Infantry Division based in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur, said the rebels were apparently irked at the continued refusal of the management of Canadian-British firm Toronto Ventures Inc. to give in to extortion by the rebels.

He said the victims, identified as Gatchaliano Simbawan and Agustin Sapian, were part of a convoy of security forces and personnel of the mining firm, who were on their way to the mine site in Barangay Kilalaban.

"We are trying to check whether these (the rebels) were the same gunmen who abducted five people and later killed two of them in Sibuco town," Atutubo said.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said blaming the MILF for every incident in Mindanao has become the norm of military officials.

"I don't know. Maybe the next time, they would say we were also responsible for the collapse of the World Trade Center," Kabalu said.

He repeated an earlier pronouncement that "we are not a bunch of money-hungry individuals. We belong to a legitimate revolutionary organization."

"They should verify their information first before releasing it to the public," Kabalu said.

In Davao City, the New People's Army said it was waging war on an alleged conspiracy between Marcopper Mining Corporation and Southeast Mindanao Gold Mining Corporation (JBSEM) to control mining operations in Diwalwal, Monkayo, Compostela Valley province.

The NPA's Conrado Heredia Command, which operates in Compostela Valley and Davao del Norte provinces, have accused the two big mining companies of "killing the operations" of small-scale miners in the area.

However, a ranking military official said the NPA's war against the big mining firms started when the firms refused to pay revolutionary taxes. ***Hernan P. dela Cruz, Lullie Micabalo and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Contractors cry out for payments

BAGUIO CITY—Contractors in the Cordillera were dumbfounded after the P65.6-million earthquake rehabilitation fund, which they had been expecting for about 10 years, was again not included in the 2002 budget of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

The contractors said the fund, which is part of the P200-million fund for the restoration of roads damaged by the earthquake in July 1990, was lost in limbo after they were assured by Congress that it would be included in the budget.

"It vanished like smoke. We went to DPWH central office in Manila to get our money and they told us that the money was again not included," one of the contractors said.

The P65.6-million was for payment for the restoration of roads damaged by the 1990 earthquake. It was also for payment for 159 contracts finished in 1993.

Letter to Revilla

A letter sent to Sen. Ramon Revilla, chair of the Senate committee of public works and highways, showed that he was even briefed by the validation and audit committee of the DPWH regarding the P65.6-million fund.

"The projects were implemented and supervised by DPWH-CAR regional office in the absence of funding allocation in order to facilitate the immediate reopening of roads. Removal of slides, filling of road cuts, widening of road sections, diversion of river flow away from road cuts and other necessary measures were immediately undertaken to open vital links connecting Benguet and Baguio City to make the roads passable for the transport of goods and services," wrote Felix Desierto, project manager of the DPWH validation and audit committee, in his letter to Revilla.

"The DPWH secretary authorized the DPWH-CAR regional director to pay the claims based on Commission on Audit inspection report or DPWH validation."

The Senate reportedly approved the 2002 DPWH budget, which included the earthquake funds.

"But when I went to the DPWH central office in Manila, they told me that the P65.6 million for the earthquake road restoration was not included in the budget," Desierto said.

'Pakyaw'

"Apparently, other contractors also followed up the money and were told the same thing," he said. "It's okay for some of us but many of the unpaid contractors are *pakyaw* (piece meal) contractors and they even borrowed money for the project in the hope that they would be paid. Their workers were also unpaid. Considering that the figure was 10 years ago, the equivalent would be much larger," he said.

Baguio Rep. Mauricio Domogan admitted that the money intended for payment for 159 individual and group contracts was used by the Cordillera congressmen for their own rehabilitation projects.

Classroom floor collapses, throws pupils into septic tank

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—At least six third grade pupils of a public school in Bacong town, some eight kilometers south of here, were rushed to the hospital on Wednesday after the concrete floor of their classroom gave way, dropping them seven feet into what turned out to be an abandoned septic tank.

The children first heard a rumbling sound before the floor of their classroom at the Bacong Central School collapsed minutes shortly before recess that morning.

Without warning, the classroom shook and the room was filled with dust.

When the smoke cleared, English teacher Jesusimo Inoferio found himself standing on the edge of a big hole where 11 of his 44 pupils fell in. Luckily, the septic tank was empty.

Some of those brought to the hospital were discharged later that day. But six others stayed for observation due to contusions in the head and other parts of the body.

"It happened so fast," Jovita Salvador, principal of the Bacong Central School, told the INQUIRER, "that some of the pupils I talked to later thought they were just having a bad dream."

Salvador said the sight of the children being pulled out of the rubble reminded her of scenes she saw on television after the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City on Sept. 11, 2001.

"But God is good because the incident happened when the regular teacher, who is sickly, was on leave. Had it been the regular teacher who was holding classes that morning, who knows what could have happened to her as well?"

The septic tank, which was a common tank for three abandoned toilets, was believed to have been constructed before World War II. The beam of the tank was made of wood and not steel cables.

District Supervisor Dr. Josefina Ragusta said there were rumors that the septic tank was connected to be part of the tunnels built by the Japanese during World War II.

The Bacong Central School, which was established in 1858, is said to be sitting on top of a maze of tunnels. Currently, there are 10 one-story buildings within the school compound.

"On the very first day of my assignment here, I noticed that my office vibrates, as if it is beside a huge factory," Ragusta said, raising fears that the other buildings may not be built on solid ground.

Arnold Santillan, an industrial arts teacher, said he once sunk a 20-foot steel bar beside the office of Dr. Ragusta and the bar just sunk into the soft ground effortlessly.

"If I released the bar, it could have disappeared under the ground." Santillan said it might be because there were tunnels underneath. Or it could have been the work of supernatural beings, he said in jest.

Ragusta had issued a memorandum to principals under his district, who may be in a similar situation, to take precautionary measures.

Bacong Mayor Lenin Alviola instructed his municipal engineer to repair the school building so that it could again be used by the school children.

The three-room school building was immediately abandoned after the floor's collapse.

Ecija farmers to have concrete houses soon

CABANATUAN CITY—Thousands of farmers will be able to replace their huts with European-style houses as local officials are constructing the country's first housing project for farmers in the province.

Mayor Sonia Lorenzo of San Isidro town said the local government is building 40 units of concrete-based bungalows with tegula roofing and these will be turned over to farmers in April.

Lorenzo said at least 5,000 farmers in Nueva Ecija are expected to take advantage of the "Pabahay sa Magsasaka Program," initiated by Gov. Tomas Joson III and supported by the Land Bank of the Philippines and the Home Development Mutual Fund.

Joson expressed hope that other mayors would follow suit.

"This kind of house will bring a sense of pride to the farming families who will own it," he said. "You see, the common feeling is that it is somewhat degrading if you are living in a small and dilapidated house."

The housing project has been crafted for farmers who are not regular income earners and non-members of pension funds.

Under the agreement signed recently by LBP president Gary Teves, HDMF president Manuel Crisostomo, Joson and Lorenzo, the LBP will finance the houses for farmers for two years.

The HDMF will then take out the account from the LBP and collect the loan amortization from farmers. A similar agreement will be signed by the mayors of the other towns and cities that will adopt the project. These mayors guarantee the housing loans.

To qualify for the project, a farmer must own a minimum of two hectares, must not be more than 45 years old, a member of an LBP-accredited cooperative, and must be of good credit standing.

Joson said the provincial government is setting aside P500,000 a month for a special fund that will serve as guarantee for the amortization of houses.

In Baguio City, National Housing Authority officials here staged a five-minute noise barrage on Wednesday to oppose the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Gene Agustin, leader of the NHA-Consolidated Union of Employees, said the creation of the DHUD would only benefit the private sector and not the poor families.

The noise barrage, which was led by the Tongtongan Ti Umili, Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) and Ornus, a city-based militant urban poor organization, also protested the privatization of basic social services.

"Most of the funds that will be allotted to the department will be handled by private developers. If the government cannot provide the basic housing needs of our people, how much more if it will be handled by the private sector?" Agustin said. ***Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Lina urges LGUs to help create jobs

INTERIOR Secretary Joey Lina sought the active participation of local government units (LGUs) in job generation.

Lina recently directed all DILG regional directors, provincial governors, city and municipal mayors, to help local cooperatives market their products and services.

In a memorandum circular, the DILG head called on all local chief executives, through the Provincial Cooperative Development Councils, to encourage the participation of cooperatives in their respective areas in the forthcoming "2nd Cooperatives and SMEs Trade Fair 2002."

The fair is held by the Department of Trade and Industry in cooperation with the DILG and the Cooperative Development Authority. It is co-organized by the Gateway East Inc. (gateway@I-next.net.) It will be held on March 21 to 24, 2002 at the Megatrade Hall 1, Building B, SM Megamall.

"The challenges of LGUs cover not only governance but also job generation and productivity of constituents," said Lina, who added that the fair serves as an "opportunity for cooperatives and SMEs to promote and market their products and services for a wider consumer base."

"The success of the cooperatives movement in the Philippines has a direct bearing on the lives of a great number of Filipinos in the countryside," Lina said.

He added that the fair also provides a venue for cooperatives to network with established SMEs.

Cooperatives and SMEs who wish to participate may contact Ms. Carina Bautista of Gateway East at 634-8671; 634-0588. Gateway East, led by its managing director Cesar Cueto, has initiated education and market-oriented projects that respond to LGUs' needs for networking, marketing and financing information.

Lina said the four-day activity is in pursuit of the UN International Labor Organization's recommendation for the global promotion of cooperative movement through regulatory, fiscal and legislative means.

STRAWBERRY PESTS

Farm ruin traced to pesticide use

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Officials here have blamed the excessive use by farmers of pesticides for the spread of spider mites in at least 50 hectares of strawberry farms in this town.

Mayor Nestor Fongwan said spider mites have been ravaging the town's strawberry farms since last year.

He also said the improper use of pesticides has killed the beneficial mites, the farms' natural pest control mechanisms, in strawberry plantations.

Fongwan, however, said the infestation will not affect the town's strawberry production.

He said agriculture experts from the Benguet State University here are propagating mite species that would eat the spider mites.

"But they (new mite species) will be available for farm distribution only during the next cropping season," he said.

At least 100 hectares of farmland in La Trinidad are devoted to strawberry production. The town produces at least 1,350 tons of strawberries yearly, making it the biggest strawberry producer in the country.

Fongwan said they have yet to collate data on the losses that the farms suffered from the infestation.

He said they had been discouraging farmers from using pesticides because of their harmful effects on the beneficial mites. "But some farmers still use highly toxic pesticides in the hope that their strawberry plants will yield bigger and more luscious fruits," he said.

The cropping season for strawberry starts in August. The strawberry plants mature and bear fruits after three months, and continue to replenish the harvested fruits until summer.

"It's like mono-cropping but (strawberry plants) will continue to bear fruits until the rainy season comes," said municipal agriculturist Felicitas Ticbaen.

Ticbaen, however, said the presence of spider mites is just "normal." She said these mites thrive throughout the year since there is no pesticide that can eliminate them.

She said the Department of Agriculture is monitoring the pesticides used by strawberry farmers.

Farmers here propagate the Chuga variety, a Japanese strawberry that Fongwan said only lives in an open field.

He said they had set aside at least P300,000 of their municipal budget for the construction of a pilot greenhouse in Barangay Bahong here. The greenhouse will produce strawberries throughout the year, including during the rainy season. ***Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers. source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi33° Lo 22°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 20°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 21°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 22°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/15/02

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Manila orphan tops PMA class this year

From page A1

wanted to become a "voice of Muslims and Christians in Mindanao" to help promote peace in the region. "I'm very happy because my daughter is graduating from the PMA with flying colors," he told the INQUIRER.

Also on the top 10 are two cadets from Mindanao, one each from Ilocos Sur, Southern Leyte, Capiz and Batangas, and two from Metro Manila.

Ranked second is Cadet First Class Chris Baloran of Matibog, Southern Leyte. He is followed by Roldan Mira of Sta. Maria, Zamboanga City; Jojie Bravo of Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur; Alexon Ramos of Batangas City; Terence Ylanan of Titay, Zamboanga del Sur; Markbien Stevens Deslate of Roxas City; William Alfred Rodriguez of San Andres Bukid, Manila; and Archibald Magbanua of Marikina City.

Of the 138 graduates, 59 are joining the Army, 31 the Air Force, and 38 the Navy. Of the female graduates, six are joining the Army, while two each are joining the Air Force and Navy.

Class goat

Gregorio Inumpa Jr., 24, of Fort del Pilar, Baguio City, is this year's class goat.

Inumpa is finally graduating this year after he failed to make it to the 2000 Class Sanghaya and the 2001 Class Kaakibat because he fared poorly in math.

"Even if he is the class goat, we are still proud of him. What is important is that he graduated from the PMA after six years," said his father, 1st Sgt. Gregory Inumpa Sr., who heads the PMA's academic support group. The young Inumpa will join the Army.

"My son really wanted to become an architect. But when he was already in the second year at the Saint Louis University, he came home one day and told us that he took the PMA entrance exam," he said.

In Zamboanga City, Mira's mother Aida, a retired public school teacher, cried when she learned that her only son opted to join the Army after his graduation.

"I'm proud he is among the topnotchers," said Mira's father, Lt. Col. Rolando Mira, commander of the Air Force squadron at the Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City.

The father said he tried to discourage his son from entering the PMA, citing the difficulties and disadvantages of being a Filipino soldier.

"But he really wanted to be a PMAer. He was nursing a fever when he took the entrance exam at the Western Mindanao State University," the elder Mira said.

In Ilocos Sur, Bravo's father, Jose, was ecstatic upon learning that his son was among the topnotchers.

The elder Bravo, who just arrived from Saudi Arabia where he worked as a technician for seven years, said it was the "best *pasalubong* (gift)" he had received.

"I have to go abroad so that I could send my children to school. My son entered the PMA because he knew how hard it was to send his younger siblings to school," he said.

Bravo, who will join the Air Force, was a consistent honor student in elementary and high school. ***With reports from Alma Grace Amay, Leoncio Balbin Jr., Gobleth Moulic and Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Rolly San Juan and Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

US to post anti-terror prosecutor in Asia

BANGKOK, Thailand—The United States will post an official in Asia to help prosecute international criminals, especially those linked to terrorist groups, officials said Thursday.

US Department of Justice crime chief Michael Horowitz said the United States had prosecutors assigned to overseas cities such as London, Paris, Rome, Bogota and Mexico City, but had none in Asia.

"Congress appropriated money for seven positions," he told reporters during an anti-terrorism conference in Bangkok. "We certainly want to have someone here in Asia. We do a tremendous amount of business here."

US law enforcement agencies have not decided where in Asia the prosecutor would be based, he said.

The prosecutor would assist Asian governments with US extradition requests and the prosecution of financial, trafficking and narcotics crimes, with an emphasis on thwarting terrorism.

US Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI, supervising agent Hardrick Crawford said personal contact between US and Asian police was crucial in fighting terrorism.

"Nobody talks to cops like cops talk to cops," he said.

"Information sharing—it's global, but we have no button we can push and instantly alert law enforcement worldwide."

He said anti-terrorism laws and procedures in some Asian countries were superior to those in the United States.

The use of technology to prevent the forgery of passports and other travel documents in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand was particularly effective, he said.

More than 30 law enforcement officials from 11 Asian nations convened with agents from the FBI and the Department of Justice at a conference this week.

Attendees included officials from China, Macau, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and the Philippines.

The participants discussed the "characteristics and behavior of terrorist organizations" and tabled measures to prevent terrorist attacks, according to a US statement.

The United States, which cohosted the event with Thailand's International Law Enforcement Academy, urged delegates to share information, tighten immigration and customs rules and cooperate in chasing down financial criminals. ***AP***

US town offers to house frozen French couple

From page A1

court's decision.

Nederland Mayor Jim Miller offered the French couple asylum in the mountain town 56 km northwest of Denver, calling the decision by French officials "ridiculous."

"Anything that the town can do for any foreign frozen dead people under stiff circumstances, we certainly are open to trying to help," said Miller whose campaign manager is a talking parrot named Jose.

Nederland has its own law against keeping corpses on private property, but Miller said he was willing to hold a special election to exempt the couple from the ordinance.

"We are trying to send a message to French officials that they shouldn't be so uptight," Miller said. "What's the difference between storing frozen loved ones in your basement as opposed to incinerating loved ones and putting their ashes on your mantle?"

Martinot's lawyer said he would appeal the court's decision, but that would not delay the couple's burial.

The elder Martinot, a biology professor, had made no secret of his hopes of one day having himself and his wife brought back to life by advances in medical science. He died last month at age 80, while his wife died in 1984.

At last week's hearing, his son's lawyer Alain Fouquet said that preserving the bodies did "not contravene public order or public health or due respect for the dead".

But the local authority argued that the law stipulated either burial or cremation. "Putting a body in a fridge cannot be considered a burial," said Christian Prioux, lawyer for the prefecture, or governor's office.

The idea of freezing bodies to extend life has attracted wealthy eccentrics and science fiction writers since the theory was first outlined in the 1950s.

Miller said the couple could be stored with Morstoel, who died on Nov. 6, 1989 in Norway.

His grandson, Trygve Bauge, had the body frozen and eventually brought to Nederland, with the hope that Morstoel would either be revived or cloned.

Bauge, who was deported in 1994 after his visa expired, pays town resident Bo Shaffer to keep Morstoel on dry ice at -68 C.

Local officials initially tried to get rid of Grandpa Bredo by passing the ordinance outlawing corpses on private property. But the law couldn't be applied retroactively, and residents took Morstoel in as one of their own.

Last weekend, the town even held a festival called "Frozen Dead Guy Days" honoring Morstoel. The festival featured coffin races and a parade led by the Grim Reaper.

"Yes, it's strange," Miller said. "But we're probably all a little strange in some way." ***Reports from AP and AFP***

What is love? . . .

From page A1

Birmingham.

According to their new study, both men and women follow their noses when seeking out a mate.

The research involved a highly scientific means of assessing attraction: Women smelled sweaty T-shirts, and they tended to prefer those worn by men with genes similar to those of their fathers.

"In choosing a partner, we are subconsciously assessing their evolutionary fitness to be a mother of children or father provider and protector," said Dr. George Forster, adviser to the think tank.

"Men are attracted to women because they smell like their mothers," and women to men whose odor resemble that of their fathers, Forster said of the results.

"This is a pretty biological or evolutionary view. Our environment molds our individual preferences but there is increasing evidence that our genes play an important part," he said.

As if that weren't enough, the study also found that opposites don't really attract, after all.

People tend to prefer others with "a somewhat similar physical and psychological profile to our own," Forster said. ***AFP***

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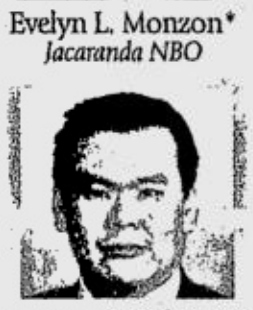

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Will police carry Erap to court?

Business as usual for Gloria, says Palace

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will be in the vicinity when Joseph Estrada appears at the Sandiganbayan today for the scheduled resumption of his trial.

At 9 a.m. the President will inaugurate the Commonwealth Mall Market, which is just a few meters away from the building housing the anti-graft court on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

Her ousted predecessor is expected to be at the Sandiganbayan at the same time.

Estrada's supporters have served notice that they would mount a protest rally outside the court.

Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for Ms Macapagal, said she wanted to show that "it's business as usual" for her despite Estrada's "theatrics."

"The President is going about her usual business," Tiglao said. "She will go to the National Government Center as scheduled. We can't allow one man to distract our nation from moving forward."

According to her schedule, the President will formally turn over 1,700 market stalls to urban poor beneficiaries.

She will also award lot titles to 1,000 urban poor families covered by the government's housing project for the National Government Center area.

Ms Macapagal's trip to the Commonwealth Mall Market was reportedly finalized on Tuesday.

From page A1

present at all his hearings.

Perez said he would be "on standby" today. "I shall be communicating with the police and advise them on what to do," he said.

Estrada's spokesperson Raymond Fortun said the deposed leader would definitely attend the 9 a.m. hearing, albeit without his original nine-member defense team.

Asked if "theatrics" could be expected in court today, as what Malacañang had been anticipating, Fortun said: "Let's see if what Tiglao claims to be our script will really happen."

After two postponements, Estrada's arraignment for his second perjury case is set to open today's proceedings.

The court will also hold its second hearing on his Nov. 10 request to undergo knee surgery in the United States, as well as start pre-trial proceedings on another case involving illegal use of an alias.

The trial was postponed for two weeks following Estrada's Feb. 27 dismissal of his defense team on the grounds that he had lost faith in the judicial system.

Heightened alert

The Philippine National Police yesterday put the entire force in Metro Manila on heightened alert.

Chief Supt. Leonardo Espina, newly designated spokesperson of the PNP, said civil disturbance management units and tactical battalions had been activated "to ensure order" at the planned protest rallies of Estrada's supporters.

As many as 3,000 policemen will be deployed at the VMMC in Quezon City, the way leading to the Sandiganbayan, the court itself, and other areas in the metropolis where mass actions are expected.

"If (Estrada's supporters) go out of bounds, we are mandated by law to maintain peace," Espina said at a press briefing. "The necessary action will be taken by the police. If they create mayhem, we have to quell that by any means."

Perez said he had informed PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza "that force should not be used on the former President."

He also said he was not sure whether Estrada would be transported to the court by land or by helicopter.

"It will depend on the presence of people who might block the travel of the former President from the (VMMC) to the Sandiganbayan," he said. "The police forces will have alternative plans depending on the situation."

Asked whether policemen serving as Estrada's security detail would be compelled to bodily carry him to court, Perez said in Filipino: "That would be difficult. He cannot be carried or dragged away. It would not look good.

"We will request that he go with his police escorts. If he has anything to say to the court, then he should tell the court, because the police are just complying with the order of the Sandiganbayan."

Perez said that should today's trial turn chaotic, the prosecution would ask the court to have it moved to the VMMC or Fort Sto. Domingo in Santa Rosa, Laguna.

He said the special detention facility and courtroom inside the PNP Special Action Forces training camp could hold both Estrada and Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari.

Motion to recall

Estrada has been rejecting all de officio counsel assigned to him by the Sandiganbayan, including seasoned private lawyers and members of the Public Attorneys Office.

Yesterday he was dumped as well by the four PAO lawyers.

Joefferson Toribio, one of the four, said they had asked the court to "recall" their appointment for two reasons: Estrada was not an indigent and therefore did not qualify to be a PAO client, and PAO lawyers did not normally team up with private de officio counsel.

Toribio was referring to Mario Ongkiko, Rodolfo Jimenez and Irene Jurado, who were appointed to Estrada earlier, and Prospero Crescini and retired Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Manuel Pamaran, who were formally appointed only yesterday.

But Toribio said all four of them from the PAO would submit to the court should it refuse to recall their appointment.

The Sandiganbayan has a standing order for all Estrada de officio counsel to appear this morning notwithstanding the rejection letters they received from their client.

Estrada sought and had an hour-long meeting with the four PAO lawyers at his detention suite at 3 p.m. yesterday to formally reject their services.

Toribio said he and his colleagues were treated to a snack of noodles and spring rolls.

Renato Bocar, spokesperson of the Sandiganbayan special division, said the justices were expected to address today issues arising from Estrada's rejection of his appointed lawyers.

Another issue up for deliberation is the state prosecutors' clamor for the court to act on the contemptuous statements made in the media by former Estrada lawyers, particularly Fortun and Rene Saguisag, Bocar said.

The other day, Bocar said Estrada "cannot complain later on" about the legality of his trial just because his lawyers were not of his own choice.

"He was given all the opportunity to get his own lawyers," Bocar said. "It's to his disadvantage if he will not cooperate."

Estrada's de officio lawyers are expected to ask the court today to give them more time to study his cases, which could mean another delay in the landmark trial.

While announcing the PAO's intention to drop Estrada as a client, Toribio admitted that the whole de officio panel had "not yet agreed on what theory of defense to adopt."

The four PAO lawyers, Ongkiko and Jurado met for the first time only last Thursday, in what turned out to be a mere "getting-to-know-you meeting," Toribio said.

He said the absence of Jimenez, and the then still unofficial appointment of Pamaran and Crescini prevented them from discussing "strategy."

Dignity

Deputy Director General Rex Piad, chief of the PNP directorial staff, urged Estrada to comply with the order for him to appear before the Sandiganbayan for the resumption of his trial.

"The dignity of the former President must be maintained not only by the courts and law enforcers but also by the ex-President himself," Piad said, adding:

"He's not above the law. He has the responsibility to maintain his status as a former President."

Chief Supt. Crescencio Maralit, director for police community relations, said the PNP would "ensure" Estrada's presence at the hearing, "but definitely no force will be used to bring him there."

"Police will explain the nuances of the procedures and will convince him to attend the trial," Maralit said.

Espina said: "All possible scenarios have been considered and prepared for. The PNP has the resources and capability to adapt to any of these situations, and address any contingency."

In Malacañang, Tiglao told reporters that Estrada should be "true to himself" and "man enough to face the court."

"We hope that Mr. Estrada finds some courage and dignity in his heart to submit to the rule of law," Tiglao said.

In a prepared statement, Tiglao said it was the "height of arrogance" for Estrada to demand the resignation of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and two other justices of the Supreme Court as a condition for him to stand trial.

"We hope his statements against the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan are not indicative of a habitual, life-long disregard for our system of laws," Tiglao said.

Describing Estrada as "someone who has little experience in our legal system," Tiglao said the ex-President should seek his lawyers' counsel before making sweeping statements against the judiciary.

Perez also urged Estrada's lawyers and advisers to counsel him to respect the law.

Noynoy backs house arrest for Estrada

From page A1

gressman, who was 17 years old when his father was tried by a military tribunal in 1977, during the Marcos dictatorship.

Aquino said he was compassionate toward Estrada not because he saw any similarity between the detention of his father and that of the ousted leader.

"It's more of a debt of gratitude," he said, adding that the then President granted all the requests he made in behalf of Tarlac but "never expected anything in return."

Aquino cited one instance when the then President asked him if he would join the largest anti-Estrada rally to be led by his mother, former President Corazon Aquino, and Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin.

"I said yes and he laughed," Aquino said, recalling that Estrada did not try to stop him.

Exile

Aquino said the proposal to exile Estrada would be difficult to consider at this point because it would sabotage the justice system.

"We have to uphold the view of the legal sector that the ends of justice must be served first before a pardon is considered," he said. "But on the political side, there is that temptation to (consider exile) to ensure political stability."

Aquino said there was pressure to consider a political solution to the issue because the business community was optimistic about the economy this year and would want to sustain it.

"There is a group that seems to be very fanatical (about Estrada)," he noted.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo said that if Ms Macapagal were sincerely against political accommodation for Estrada, she should ask Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and three opposition senators to stop their "back-channeling" activities.

"Back-channeling is within the context of political accommodation, and this should be discontinued because the issue here is justice," he said.

Ocampo noted that Ms Macapagal could not entirely set aside the prospect of exile for Estrada because of the threat of political instability posed by the ex-President's supporters.

"Apparently, (exile) keeps coming back to her with all these political figures hovering around her offering a political solution," Ocampo said. "The best way for her is to discourage this back-channeling and leave it all to the court."

Ocampo was reacting to the President's statement Wednesday that she had favored exile for Estrada but that this was before he was charged with plunder and arrested.

Camarines Sur Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr. assailed Estrada for demanding the resignation of Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Associate Justices Artemio Panganiban and Antonio Carpio as a condition for his agreeing to be tried.

"Being a party to the case, he cannot impose conditions on the court. Likewise, he should not act as if he were still the President," said Andaya, who is among those opposed to sending Estrada abroad for knee surgery or to exile.

VAL HANDUMON

NOYNOY AQUINO: A proposal to defuse political tensions and for a courteous accommodation of a former President.

Tiglao pals deny ransom payment links

From page A1

with their association dating back to their activist days during the Marcos dictatorship.

In his press briefing yesterday, Tiglao said the two were his "longtime acquaintances" but said the rumor that the Palace had any hand in the payoffs was a "total lie."

"I don't know if they are involved," Tiglao said. "We believe they are not involved."

The incoming Press Secretary blamed Sen. Panfilo Lacson, a former chief of the Philippine National Police, for spreading the rumor. He said Lacson dragged his name into the alleged ransom payoffs when he exposed the senator's attempt last December to negotiate ransom for American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham.

Saño, an anchorman at the RMN radio network known as Cesar Padilla, noted that the allegations "were never validated for the simple reason that these were not true."

He recalled that the same accusations being leveled against him and Baviera by Lacson were the same ones which surfaced last year.

While Saño was previously identified with the Estrada administration, Baviera is reportedly the one who enjoys connections to Malacañang under the Macapagal administration.

"I was surprised with the allegation, based on a supposed intelligence report done as far back as last year, and which had remained unverified until its resurrection now, and essentially the same as what had been answered before," Saño said.

He appealed to "people responsible for this story to carefully verify their sources as this has affected my family and my reputation as a private individual."

Tiglao, Saño and Baviera all belong to the First Quarter Storm Foundation.

Legal offensive

A special police unit has recommended a "legal offensive" against "those who negotiate in behalf of or with the Abu Sayyaf."

In a report on the safe recovery of Dos Palmas victims Lalaine Chua and Luis Bautista III, Supt. Francisco Don C. Montenegro, chief of the Special Task Group intelligence and operations division, suggested that special operations against the Abu Sayyaf Group call "for a more active legal offensive against these personalities."

Montenegro also said it was "inevitable that ransom payments are demanded and paid whenever the ASG abducts local and foreign tourists/investors."

"It is therefore necessary, as a matter of (standard operating procedure), that, in all future incidents, intelligence officers should be immediately, but discreetly designated/assigned to assist each and every family of future victims," he said.

Montenegro added that it would be the task of these intelligence officers "to monitor and guide the family in negotiating with the ASG or any armed group for that matter."

In his report, Montenegro identified Saño and Baviera, "who claims to be from the Office of the President" as "negotiators."

He also claimed that the ransom payments were made through Dr. Huda Lim, a former Philippine National Red Cross coordinator based in Basilan.

"(There were) other negotiators and ASG contacts in Zamboanga City prior to or after their release," Montenegro said.

According to the report, the debriefing of Benito Chua, father of Lalaine, showed that businessman Reghis Romero paid P25 million in ransom for his and his girlfriend Rissa Santos' release.

"P5 million was received by the ASG while the balance of P20 million was divided among Baviera, Saño and other negotiators," Montenegro wrote.

Lawyer Francis Ganzon and his wife Tess and the family of Kimberly Jao paid P8 million, P5 million of which was reportedly retained by the ASG while the remainder went to the negotiators.

Montenegro said the Jao family even paid Saño P100,000 as "acceptance fee."

For the release of Lalaine, her father paid a total of P6 million but only half went to the ASG, the report claimed.

All told, Saño and Baviera are alleged to have facilitated some P39 million in ransom payments to the bandit group but reportedly kept P26 million for themselves.

Tiglao earlier said he was ready to face a Senate investigation should President Macapagal give him the go-ahead.

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TO PREVENT MISENCOUNTERS

RP, US troops to notify MILF when they operate in rebels' turf

SOLDIERS taking part in anti-terror operations in certain parts of Mindanao have agreed to give notice to the Moro Islamic Liberation Front when they operate in MILF turf, in order to avoid accidental encounters. The MILF will be told in advance when US forces or AFP units are in the area, a rebel spokesperson said.

The agreement was reached in talks between military officers and rebel commanders aimed at strengthening a five-month-old ceasefire agreement.

"Under the agreement, troops taking part in the exercises should have prior coordination with us before they enter our area. We will, of course, allow them to come in," MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said in a phone interview.

"This system of coordination was triggered by fears that Americans might get involved in the fighting and this might result in a bigger war," Kabalu added. "This is to avoid misencounters."

He said the system of prior consultation would apply not only in MILF areas in Basilan, but elsewhere in those parts of Mindanao where the MILF also operates.

Joint RP-US military exercises call for about 160 US Special Forces to join Filipino soldiers in patrols in potential combat zones in Basilan, where the Abu Sayyaf bandit group enjoys local support.

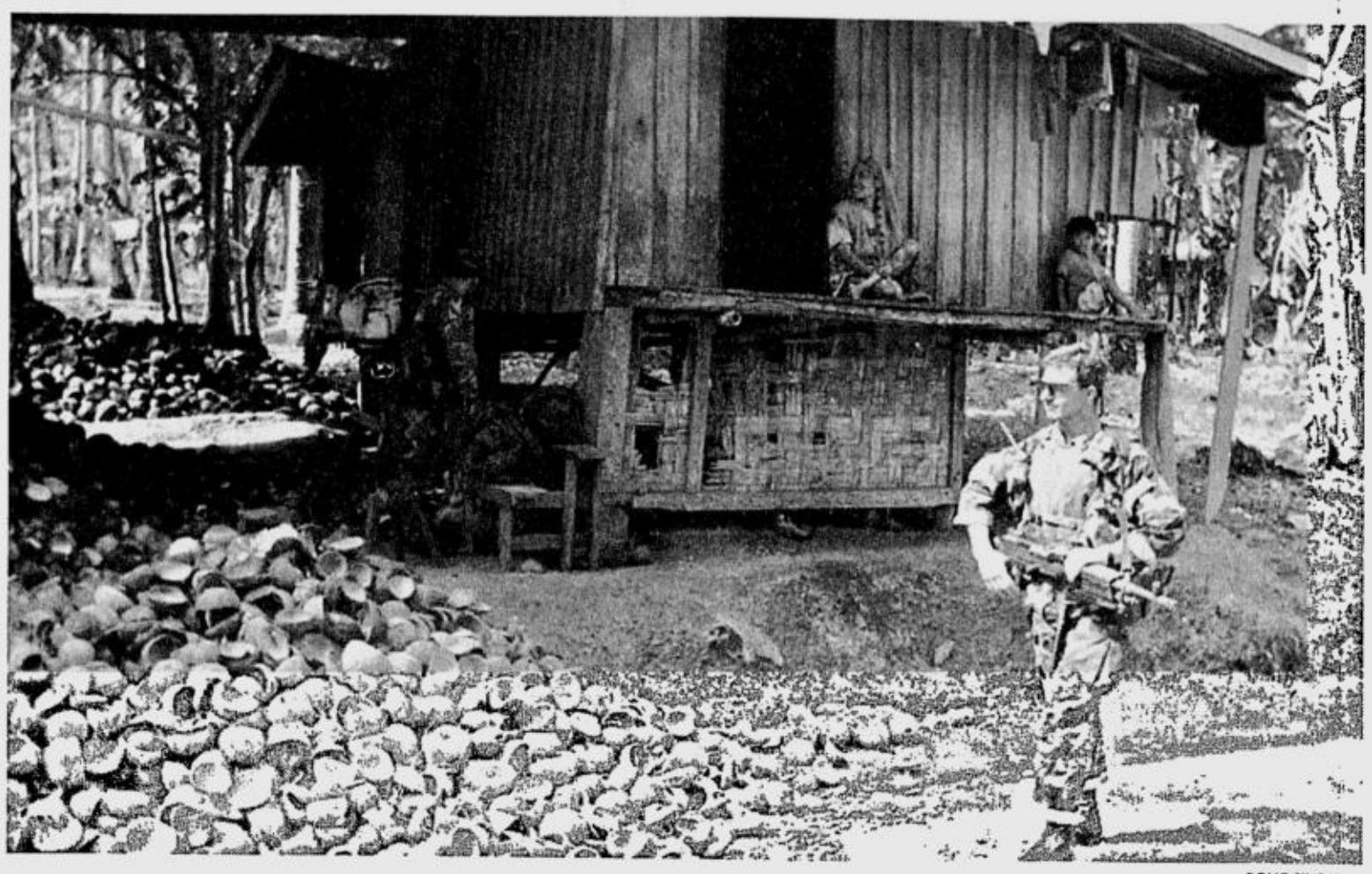
"A coordination system will be established . . . for the smooth and successful implementation of the (ceasefire) agreement," read a joint statement issued by the government and MILF panels.

"The coordination mechanism is designed to avoid the recurrence of hostilities," it said.

More than 600 US servicemen are taking part in the exercises intended to upgrade the skills of Filipino troops in fighting the Abu Sayyaf.

The United States has linked the Abu Sayyaf to Saudi-born dissident Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network, prime suspects in the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington.

The MILF, which has distanced itself from the smaller but more radical Abu Sayyaf, has several hundred guerrillas also operating in Basilan. ***Reuters***



BONG SIMBAJON

A US Special Forces soldier just happens to be walking through Semut, Tuburan, Basilan, a known stronghold of the MILF.

Military pressure forcing Abus to flee Basilan—AFP

From page A1

the couple, abducted by the Abu Sayyaf from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan last May 27, were being held by Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon Hapilon, who reportedly has 20-30 men under him.

In Davao City, controversial parish priest Fr. Cirilo "Loi" Nacorda tagged Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar as a key Abu Sayyaf supporter.

Akbar was one of the founders of the group, but he has said he left the group before its transformation into a kidnap-for-ransom gang.

Yesterday, Akbar laughed off the allegation, saying Nacorda must have already gotten tired of accusing military officials.

Nacorda said the Abu Sayyaf gained strength in Basilan after Akbar's election as governor, and claimed that during the early days of the Dos Palmas hostage crisis, Akbar even sent rice to the kidnappers. Last June 1, he added, the governor allegedly went back to the bandits' camp to deliver flashlights.

Recent arrests

"This is just a series of arrests that we are making," Diaz told reporters. "We should be able to get valuable information from (those we arrested)."

Diaz said lower courts had issued pending arrest warrants against Assa for the kidnapping of dozens of schoolchildren and their teachers in the town of Sumisip in March 2000, as well as the beheading of two male teachers from that batch of kidnap victims.

He said Assa had also been charged for his role in the sacking of Ipil town in 1995, when the gunmen murdered more than 50 people and torched the town center.

Assa was arrested Tuesday after he was identified by one of his kidnap victims, Diaz said.

Assa smiled when he was presented to journalists by Diaz and SouthCom spokesperson Lt. Col. Danilo Servando. He refused to speak to reporters.

Servando said military and police units involved in Assa's arrest were conducting follow-up operations that were expected to result in more arrests of "key personalities" in the Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to the al-Qaida terror network.

Servando said the government might share some interrogation reports on Assa with US forces as part of the "intelligence fusion" of the two sides involved in the ongoing Balikatan training exercise.

"For operational matters, this will be used only by the Philippine forces," he added.

Sighting details

Mayor Salajin said he had already furnished details of the sightings to the military, and that some Abu Sayyaf supporters had purchased supplies in Lantawan recently.

"Isnilon is holding on to the Americans . . . The two are being held by Isnilon while the other one (Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap) is still with (Abu) Sabaya," Salajin said in Filipino. Sabaya, or Aldam Tilao, is the bandit group's notorious spokesperson.

Salajin said he had also received information that Khadaffy Janjalani was holed up in Tawi-Tawi, resting.

Contacted for comment, Southern Command spokesperson for operations Capt. Noel Detoyato told defense reporters that troops had already been dispatched to check the report.

"We have received the information and our troops are now verifying it by conducting an operation in the area," Detoyato said.

Salajin said that the Abu Sayyaf was constantly on the move, not staying in any one place for more than an hour. He said the bandits had split up into smaller groups and were now roaming the area bounded by the towns of Maluso, Lantawan and Sumisip.

Akbar's involvement

During the infamous Lamitan siege last June 2, when the cornered bandits managed to escape a military cordon, Akbar's involvement became very evident, Nacorda claimed.

He said that before the bandits sneaked out of the Jose Torres Memorial Hospital, many residents saw Akbar talking with some military personnel. In his testimony before a congressional committee investigating the incident, Nacorda had said that a pay-off to buy the group's escape was made inside the hospital. But Akbar has denied the allegations.

Yesterday, Akbar said it would have been impossible for him to be at the hospital during the Lamitan siege and at the same time conduct media interviews in another location.

"I have all the media (interviews) with their videos that prove where I was from May 31 to June 3. (Nacorda) better review his charges. And as for me, I'm still contemplating whether *papatulan ko siya o pababayaan na lang* (I will reply to him or ignore him)," he said.

Akbar said even as the charges were serious, he was not "affected at all, because what he (said were) lies."

Nacorda, himself a former hostage, said Akbar was actually one of the organizers of the bandit group. The Abu Sayyaf "was organized (by Akbar) just outside the military brigade camp in Isabela," along with Abdurajak Janjalani and the governor's chief of staff, whom he did not identify.

"I have my witnesses and they are strong and credible witnesses," Nacorda said.

He said documents implicating Akbar and other officials were already submitted to the Ombudsman. ***With reports from AFP and AP***

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ◉ Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2002

Beerfest at Padi's Mindave

PADI's Mindave located on Mindanao Avenue corner Congressional Avenue will host a bikini contest, mud-wrestling and bodybuilding events as part of its "Summer Beerfest" festival. The mud-wrestling challenge will start on March 25, while body building competitions will be held every Tuesday. Those interested to join may call: 722-99-81, 453-00-80, 700-5221 to 23 or text 0917-8135916.

FINAL PREVIEW

Spring shoots down Guardo

By Roy Luarca

CEBU CITY—Spring Cooking Oil nipped fellow Philippine entry Guardo-M. Lhuillier, 98-95, yesterday in a preview of their final tussle for the Southeast Asia Basketball Association Champion's Cup title at the Cebu Coliseum.

The two teams clash anew at 5:30 p.m. today to settle an unfinished business that dates back to the Cebu Basketball League's President's Cup late last month. That time, M. Lhuillier emerged champion by forfeiture after Spring Cooking Oil decided to walk out in the final.

Now, both teams are eager to find out which one is really better.

Though Spring Cooking Oil posted a four-game sweep of the elimination round, it doesn't carry weight as it still has to repeat over Guardo- M. Lhuillier, which took the second championship berth with a 3-1 card.

Guardo-M. Lhuillier, composed mostly of Cebu Basketball League stalwarts, earned the right to challenge Spring Cooking Oil with a 109-78 rout of Tong Whye of Singapore Wednesday night. Veteran Bobby Parks again led Spring Cooking Oil's assault in the see-saw ing fourth quarter, pumping in 12 of his game-high 27 points in that span, including two freethrows that broke a 95-95 tie with 21 seconds left.

In the ensuing play, Guardo-M. Lhuillier's Aldrich Reyes threw away the ball, after which Spring Oil's Joel Co canned the first of his two freethrows for the final count.

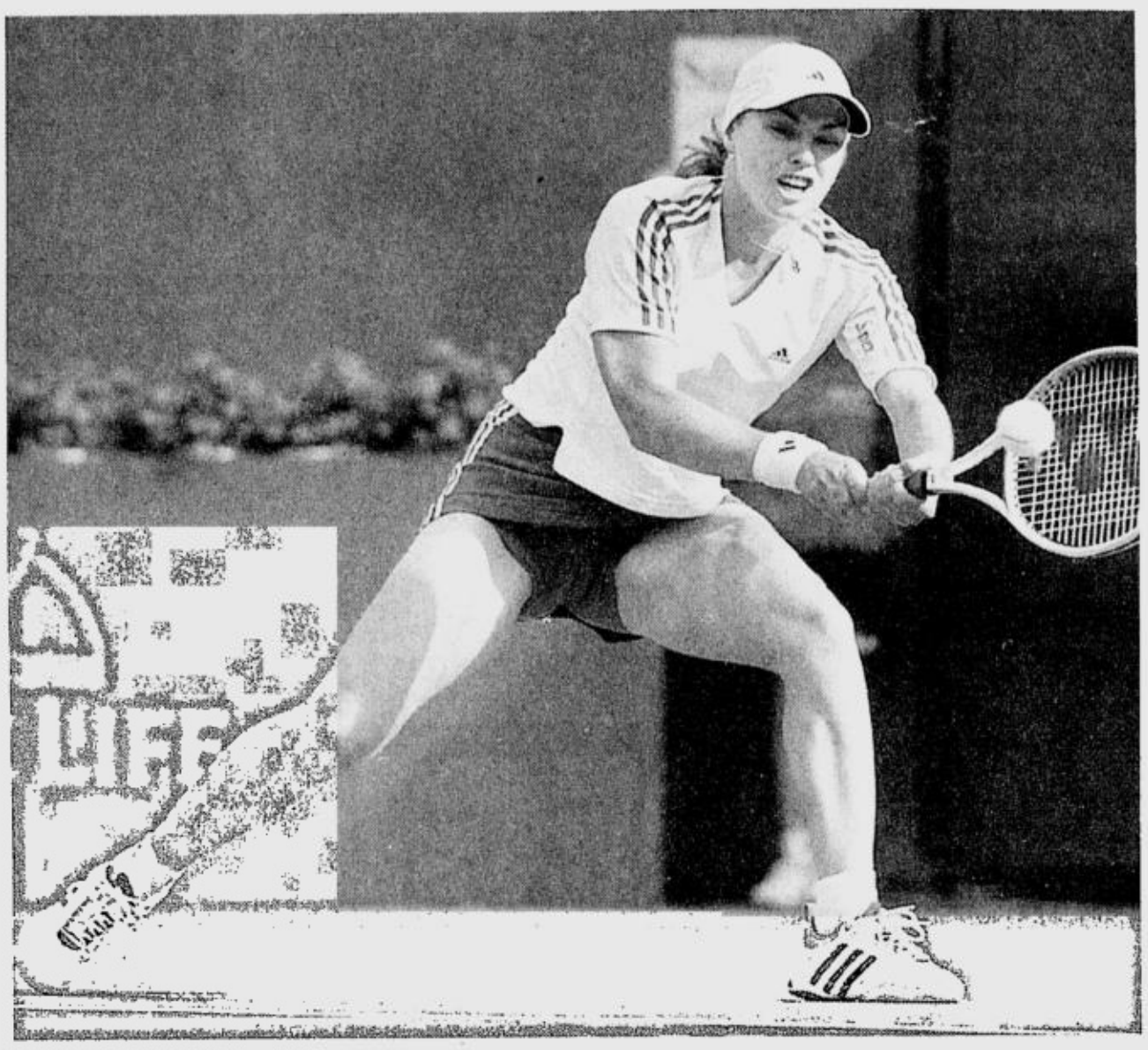
"We'll have to make some adjustments because their trapping defense nearly did us in," said Spring Oil coach Tito Palma.

Scores:

RP SPRING COOKING OIL 98—Parks 27, Jihad 23, Co 13, Buendia 11, Ricafuente 10, Reyes 6, Ferma 4, Garcia 2, Torres 2.

RP GUARDO-M.LHUILLIER 95—Maglasang 21, White 14, Reyes 13, Jaca 10, Huelar 9, Smith 7, Enriquez 7, Marata 4, Cantona 2.

Quarters: 20-21, 47-46, 75-68, 98-95.



MARTINA Hingis of Switzerland returns a shot to Amanda Coetzer of South Africa during their match at the Pacific Life Open, Wednesday in Indian Wells, California. Hingis won, 6-1, 6-2. AP

PSC boosts grassroots dev't drive

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission has finally put into a motion a bold initiative that would provide a system for the country's grassroots development program that runs in consonance with a similarly well-oiled elite sports objective.

PSC chair Eric Buhain, in addressing the launching of the National Grassroots Sports Development Program Technical Consultative Assembly at the Bayview Hotel yesterday, made it clear that the agency's objective is not to oversee grassroots development only-skin deep but kick it into action without isolating it from the ultimate goal of scoring victories overseas.

"I firmly believe that in our concerted effort to propagate the Sport For All policy, the PSC should comb the grassroots and ultimately break the barriers of seclusion and elitism in Philippine sports," Buhain told over 400 delegates from all over the country who are attending the three-day conclave.

The assembly envisions a grassroots program that would systematize the mass-based programs and events, including the Palarong Pambansa which will be revived this summer either in Naga City or Tubod, the Batang Pinoy-Philippine National Youth Games and the Commission on Higher Education Games, among others.

All these, Buhain explained, are to culminate with the Philippine National Open Championships, or the national games, which will be staged beginning next year. The championships are the national opens of all national sports association to be staged almost simultaneously in practically one venue.

In stressing that there should be no barriers between grassroots and elite sports, the PSC has invited former elite athletes—Paeng Nepomuceno, Akiko Thomson, Lydia De Vega Mercado, Elma Muros Posadas, Efren 'Bata' Reyes, Jaime Sebastian and Ral Rosario, among others—all of whom contributed in putting the Philippines in the world sporting map.

The PSC, Buhain furthered, is also throwing its weight into the grassroots, one of the prime objectives it hardly mustered for over a decade until recently when school sports responsibilities were formally transferred to its turf from the Department of Education (DepEd).

" Being a policymaking body requires that we take the vanguard move to lead the country in implementing national actions to allow grassroots participation and involvement," he said.

Purefoods edges SMB

GAME TODAY (Malolos, Bulacan)
5:30p.m.—Hapee-RP vs Shell

By June Navarro

DERRICK Brown sparkled as the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs turned back San Miguel Beer, 72-70, to book the first quarterfinal ticket in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup at the Makati Coliseum last night.

Listless in the first three periods, Brown presided over a final-quarter scoring binge, knocking in 16 of his 26 points in that span as the Hotdogs regained the solo leadership with a 5-1 record.

"It's definitely the toughest game. We had been languid three-fourths of the way until Brown switched the button on," said interim Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio.

Scores:

PUREFOODS 72—Brown 26, White 15, Patrimonio 13, Evangelista 9, Yee 4, Magsanoc 3, Mendiola 2, Balingit 0, Yap 0, Raymundo 0, Cantonjos 0.

SAN MIGUEL 70—Strothers 20, Victoria 17, Bennett 16, Pena 6, Mente 5, Belasco 4, Duat 2, Lago 0.

NBA RESULTS

Boston 97, New Jersey 89; Atlanta 105, Denver 102; Orlando 119, Phoenix 114, OT; Detroit 85, Cleveland 84; Houston 96, Minnesota 95; Sacramento 92, Philadelphia 88; L.A. Clippers 96, Washington 75. AP

Sampras, Hingis, Seles advance

INDIAN WELLS, California—Pete Sampras, his overall game a bit ragged but his serve still sharp, beat Albert Costa 6-4, 6-4 in Wednesday in the second round of the Pacific Life Open.

Sampras, looking for his first tournament title since Wimbledon two years ago, got a break by playing in the afternoon.

Earlier, swirling winds had kicked up the desert sand and left a thin layer of grit on the courts. But the gusts had subsided by the time Sampras and Costa began their match, and workers had used blowers to clear most of the sand off the courts.

In a morning match when the wind was gusting, top-ranked Lleyton Hewitt bounced back from a first-set loss to beat Andrei Pavel 4-6, 6-3, 6-0.

The wind was still whipping sand around in the early afternoon when Martina Hingis and Monica Seles won to move into a showdown in the semifinals.

Hingis downed Amanda Coetzer 6-1, 6-2. Seles beat Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario 6-3, 3-6, 6-3.

Daniela Hantuchova will play Emmanuelle Gagliardi in Thursday's other semifinal. AP

Manila wants Rizal Memorial back

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

MANILA Councilor Don Ramon Bagatsing, the city council's minority leader, is supporting Mayor Lito Atienza's efforts to recover the Rizal Park, Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, the Manila Harbor and Intramuros. The fourth district councilor is also seeking congressional action to pursue that claim.

Bagatsing wants Congress, through Manila congressmen Jaime Lopez, Harry Angping, Mark Jimenez, Joey Hizon and Ernesto Nieva, to repeal or amend the presidential decrees and restore the city's so-called "crown jewels" or pieces of prime properties that were taken away from the local government during the martial law years. The decrees were issued by then President Ferdinand Marcos in the late 1970s.

A similar claim, specifically the recovery of the RMSCA, has been made some years back by then Manila councilor Grepor "Butch" Belgica, a former convict who turned a new leaf by becoming a preacher. During a forum organized by the Philippine Sportswriters Association when I was its president, the straight-talking Belgica said he found it bizarre that a city teeming with a population of close to four million does not even have a sports complex it can call its own.

"*Malungkot, pero iyan ang katotohanan.* (it's sad, but that's the truth)," stressed Belgica, adding that Manila's claim to the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex was based on a city council resolution passed in 1996. He said that unlike some provincial capitals of lesser stature than Manila which have their own sports facilities, Manila, the Philippines' premier city, does not have a presentable coliseum to conduct its sports activities. Worse, he asked, "Why should Manila residents pay rentals for the use of sports facilities (which rightfully belong to them) at the Rizal Memorial Complex. *Hindi ba dapat sila pa sa* (Philippine Sports Commission) *ang mag-bayad ng* rental *sa* city of Manila?"

FLIGHT UPDATES

THE BEST OF PUERTO PRINCESA:

ELEMENTARY DIVISION - FLAT KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	Mary Jane Aaron	Pagi
2nd Prize	Reynard Lagasca	Clown Fish
3rd Prize	Patrick Mendoza	Flying Patrick
HIGH SCHOOL DIVISION - FLAT KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	John Constantino	American Swallow Tail
2nd Prize	Armando Magarce	Paro Parong Lawlaw
3rd Prize	Jepra Malabag	Box Box 2
COLLEGE DIVISION - GEOMETRIC KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	Raymond Lagasca	Triangle ni Pepe
2nd Prize	Raul David	Layer 2002
3rd Prize	Apol Raiz	Morning Star
ADULTS DIVISION - GEOMETRIC KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	Ruming Santos	Hope 2002
2nd Prize	Gilbert Cajulao	Pag-awang Bayan
3rd Prize	Norberto Perez	Octagon Satellite
COLLEGE DIVISION - FIGURE KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	Timoteo Villas	Bangka
2nd Prize	Rosembar Lagas	Killer Whale
3rd Prize	Prince Gallardo	Godzilla
ADULTS DIVISION - FIGURE KITE CATEGORY		
1st Prize	Gilbert Cajulao	Kalayaan 2002
2nd Prize	Paul David	Twin Butterfly
3rd Prize	Raul Alvarado	Butterfly
SARANGGOLA NI BEAR BRAND		
Elementary	Chester Centeno	Chino the Butterfly
Adults	Ruth, Darly, Jay, Lye, El-el	Barkadahan
SUPERKITE AWARD		
	Francisco Abarca	Bubuyog

Watch out for BEAR BRAND Kitefest 2002!
Happening next at the Agro Industrial Foundation Grounds, Davao City on March 17,2002.

Motocross tilt today

SHELL-YAMAHA, the winningest motocross team in local history, will be the team to watch in the National Motocross Series 2002, which begins today in Passi, Iloilo.

Bannered by seven-time champion Jovie Saulog and former titlist Ernie Leongson, the Shell-Yamaha team is expected to dominate several categories in this annual series organized by the Hartebeest Entertainment Corp. and sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa).

Saulog and Leongson will vie for the title in the centerpiece expert open category, along with 1999 "Rider of the Year" Jing Leongson, Cebu bet Popeye Rubi and Puerto Princesa City–based Weng Yapparcon.

Leongson, who is best remembered for ruling the prestigious Saipan Open last year, said this year's team underwent rigid training under the supervision of some of the country's noted motocross experts.

Davao kitefest

DAVAO City takes its turn as host of the much-awaited Bear Brand Kitefest 2002—the biggest kite-flying competition in the country—on Sunday, March 17.

Venue of the one-day competition is the sprawling Agro-Industrial Foundation grounds.

"We expect a big turnout of participants in the Davao leg this year," said Davao City event coordinator Nita Lucas.

Members tourney tomorrow

THE MEMBERS monthly tournament for March of Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Country Club will be held tomorrow, Saturday, at the friendly Aoki course of the country's biggest golf complex with Mizuno/Masters Sports as main sponsor.

Tee-off will be shotgun style at 7:30 a.m. with last month's winners Romeo Odi and Ramir Encabo returning to defend their respective low gross and low net titles and lead a field of no less than 150 players.

Mizuno, through its chief operating officer Lovell Gopez and sales and marketing chief Daboy del Carmen, will be providing an attractive package of prizes for both the tournament and raffle.

Mizuno will also put on display its latest line of drivers, irons and other equipment to be offered with special discounts.

"The Eagle Ridge kicks off our summer blitz wherein we will be going around golf courses as well as popular driving ranges for our annual Demo Tour," said Gopez. The Demo Tour will go to Villamor (March 23), Southpoint (April 4), Power Golf (April 11), Veterans (April 18), Logcom (April 25) and Kagitingan (April 27).

Off-road races set

AFTER the successful staging of the Philippine Tough Truck Challenge last year, the big truck competition goes national with the kickoff of the 2002 Caltex Delo Xtreme 4x5 Off-Road Series this weekend, March 16-17, in Lanang, Davao City.

Over 80 participants from all over the country have confirmed their participation in the said event presented by Caltex Delo and co-presented by Procter and Gamble Philippines.

DICKIES RACING
Up-and-coming racer Monching Guiterrez becomes the first local driver to don the colors of the prestigious Dickies Racing team as he defends his Challenge Cup title in this year's SVI racing circuit which starts on April 13-14 at the Subic International Raceway inside the SBMA. Dickies, which is currently the Philippines' favorite apparel, is also the number one workwear in the United States.

MBA goes countryside

THE METROPOLITAN Basketball Association is intent on building its own facilities in the countryside while announcing it has removed a Metro Manila team in the 2002 season.

It said Manila is saturated with basketball leagues—the PBA and PBL.

"There is no need at the moment to rebuild a team from Metro Manila," said Santi Araneta, chair of the Multi-Regional Basketball, Inc. which oversees the MBA. "The city is overflowing with basketball already."

He said the MBA has trained its eye on erecting modern facilities in the provinces.

"We are spearheading the construction of modern facilities in many places outside Metro Manila, since it is really part of the MBA's objective as a truly national sports league to help grassroots development," said Araneta. "In fact our new facility in Batangas City which will open in September is the first of four or five being built or planned across the country in conjunction with the MBA."

Apart from Batangas City, other stadiums are in various stages of completion in Davao City, Olongapo and Pampanga.

Pampanga cockfest today

THE GRAND showdown of bigtime cockers from Central Luzon, Manila, Cebu and Bacolod rages at 4 p.m. today as Pampanga Coliseum (San Fernando City) presents the much-awaited "Sagupaan Bigtime 5-Cock Invitational Derby".

Sabong idol Patrick Antonio, derby host, said the one-day event will feature more than 90 fights. Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer and Sagupaan B-50 Forten.

Antonio's derby promotion last year (Sagupaan Invitational 5-Stag Derby) was Pampanga Coliseum's biggest crowd-drawer to date, as more than 7,000 cockfight aficionados witnessed the event.

Bannering the participants from Central Luzon are Eric Lu, Danny Pineda, engineer Ramos, Jun Jingco and Mayor Punzalan.

Triathlon set

THE FIRST leg of the Fit & Try Youth Triathlon series starts on Sunday, March 17, at the De La Salle Zobel swimming pool in Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinglupa. Call 896-4544, 0919-269-3464, 911-7720, or 0917-792-8040 for details.

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SPORTSWATCH

Peping solo champ

CAT Tarzan of Peping Cojuangco's dreaded gamefowl made mincemeat of the opposition late Wednesday night by scoring 6-1/2 points to emerge solo champion of the NCA 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum. Five other entries wound up second with 5 points each in this blockbuster derby hosted by Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco. These were JRS Cat Stinger of Jun Sevilla, Fantastic Kalvin of Alan Tan, Combine Harvester, R&B Farm I of Rep. Claude Bautista and Boyboy Roa and King Cobra of the ageless James Chiongbian. Finishing close behind with 4 ½ points were Spencer Winslet of recent World Slasher champion Dicky Lim, Binangonan SMV of three-term Rizal Gov. Ito Ynares, JJM Geran of Jung Jung Morales, R&B Farm II of Boyboy Roa and Claude Bautista and Liza Galore of derby hosts Eddie and Bomboy Araneta. Meanwhile, another NCA 7-Cock Derby will be held on March 18-20, with Pampanga's cocking champions Jun and Rudy Jingco, Jet Fernando, Philip Chiongbian, Boy Velez, Johnny Jalandoni, Ramon Guanzon, Ed Ledesma and Boy Nilo Lizares as hosts.

Pasay derby tonight

THE PASAY City Cockpit plays host to a 4-cock derby at 7 tonight. Derby sponsors are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Hammer Dewormer. Derby hosts are Manuel Polo of Parañaque and Bert Arizobal, fresh from ruling the 4th PCCA 4-cock derby last Friday. At stake is P30,000. For inquiries on submission of weights, call 816-6750, 843-1890 or 843-1746. Also slated at PCC is another 4-cock derby on March 22 with Renato Shio as host. There will be no derby on March 29 (Good Friday).

'Larong Pinoy' on Sunday

THE LARONG Pinoy Pampamilya reels off at the Quezon Memorial Circle Liwasang Aurora on Sunday, March 17, at 7 a.m., Quezon City Parks president Charito Planas announced.

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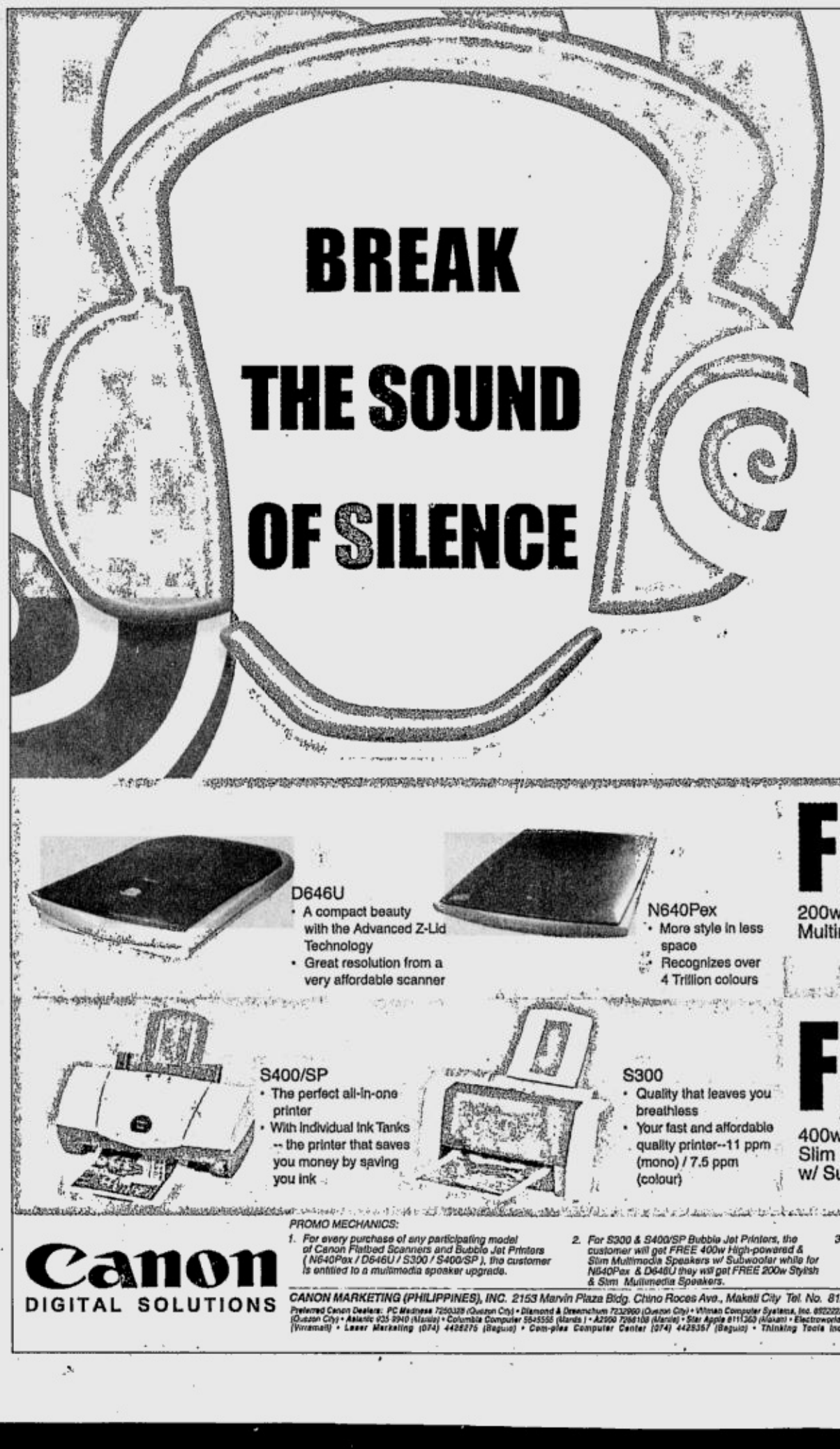
Race 3—1. Race for Gold 2. Little Timothy 3. Worth Ur While 4. King Size 5. So Generous
Race 4—1. Snake Dancer 2. Maximo 3. Wag Ingay
Race 5—1. Cheese Laffongga 2. Eightwoconnection 3. Sky Wind 4. Shuttle's Rianne
Race 6—1. Royal Worship 2. Irish Star 3. Lorna 4. James Joy 5. High Fidelity
Race 7—1. Metronome 2. Viva Rosa 3. Main Street 4. Techno Blues 5. Precious Stone
Race 8—1. The Mailman 2. Brenda Starr 3. Accommodating 4. Adam's Call
Race 9—1. King Aldrin 2. Marginal Note 3. Tayp Ko Yan 4. Ringer Kid 5. Majestic Ruler 6. Power Corrupts



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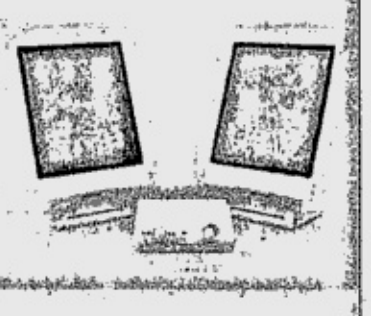

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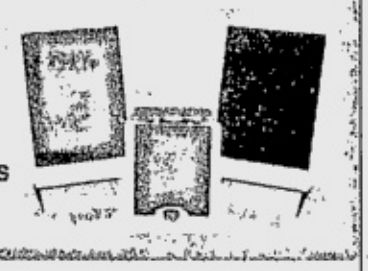

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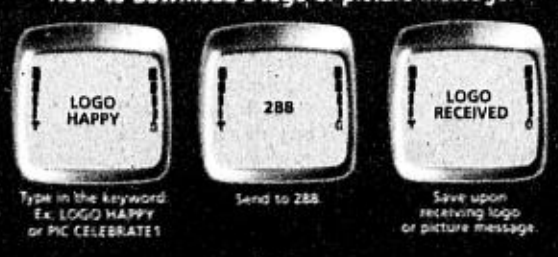

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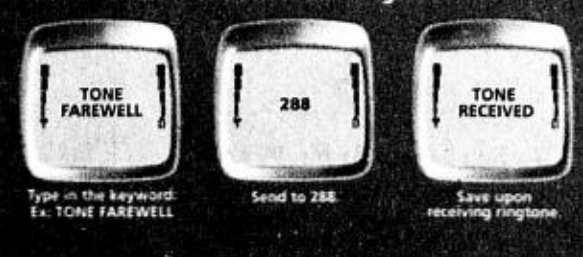

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METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

Time for the PBA to rethink the poison in The Zone /A27
13 years of service ends in disgrace /A29

Relatives fighting in GMA 7 'battle'

By Leah Salterio

THE UPHEAVALS in GMA 7 are a case of power- grabbing, said a network insider following the suspension of GMA executive Roberto "Bobby" Barreiro last Monday.

Ironically, the battling forces inside the network are relatives, the source said.

RELATIVES/ A28

SANCHEZ

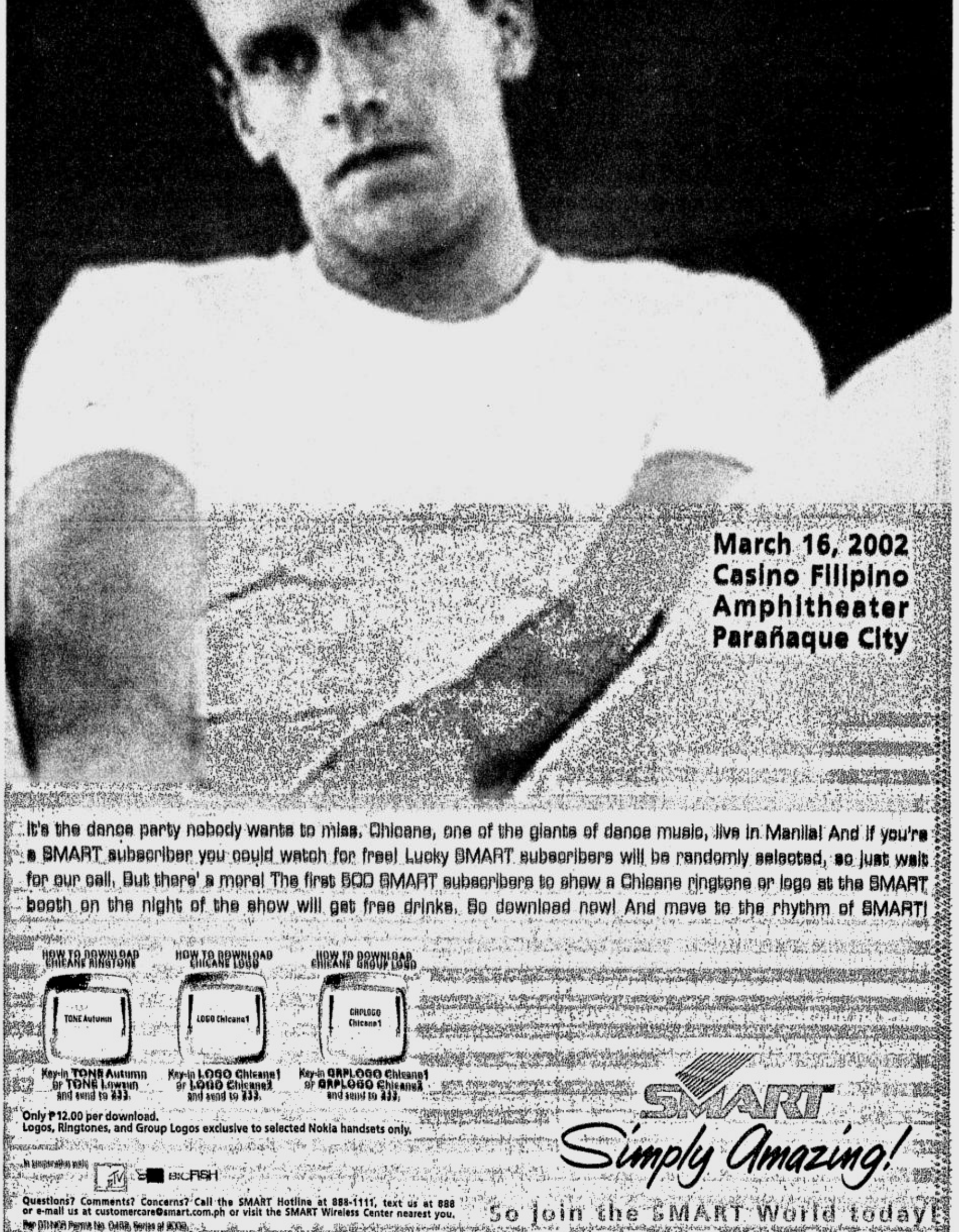
DOJ starts Korina case preliminary investigation

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice yesterday started the preliminary investigation of criminal charges filed against ABS-CBN television and radio host Korina Sanchez by her former housemaid.

The preliminary investigation focuses on charges that Sanchez withheld the salary and

DOJ STARTS/ A28



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9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

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1	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
2	SHIPPING NEWS
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	D-TOX
5	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	ESKANDALOSA
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	BIBINGKA

SM CITY CEBU
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1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	RAT RACE
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	MILLION DOLLAR MANSION
5	SHALLOW HAL
6	ESKANDALOSA
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	13 GHOSTS

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	CLOSED
3	13 GHOSTS
4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
6	ALI
7	CLOSED
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1	13 GHOSTS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ALI
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	ESKANDALOSA
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1	BIBINGKA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	EVA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	SHALLOW HAL
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	13 GHOSTS

SM BICUTAN

1	
2	SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND
3	
4	

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1	
2	SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND
3	
4	

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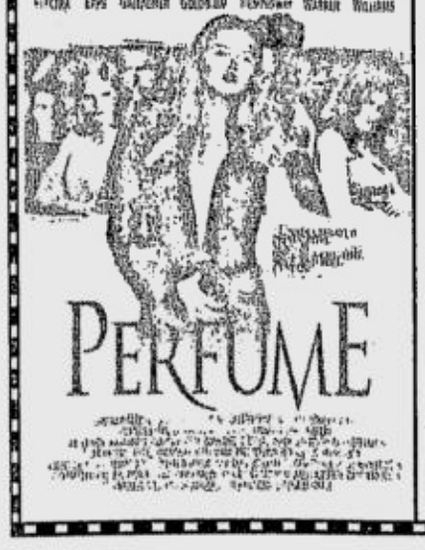

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-- Janice Crawford,"V"Magazine

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CAST: Carmen Electra, Omar Epps, Peter Gallagher, Jeff Goldblum, Mariel Hemingway, Estella Warren & Michelle Williams

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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4 GOLD (DTS)	D-TOX
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
6 GOLD (SDDS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	13 GHOSTS
10	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

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(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1	
2	EVA
3 (DTS)	
4	
5	
6 (DTS)	

Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMA
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3	EVA

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(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

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3	EVA
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
5	BIBINGKA

METROPOLIS star
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1	EVA
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BIBINGKA
4	WE WERE SOLDIERS
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7	
8	

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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1	
2	EVA
3	BIBINGKA

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1	EVA
A	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

Sunshine
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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	RESERVE
4	EVA

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY)	D-TOX
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	BIBINGKA
5	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
6	EVA
7 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	BIBINGKA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BIBINGKA
3	EVA
4 (SDDS)	D-TOX
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8	ESKANDALOSA
9	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

Gotesco Commonwealth
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1 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX
6	BIBINGKA
7 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8	ESKANDALOSA

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1	EVA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
4	BIBINGKA
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX

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1	BIBINGKA

Sampaguita
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Dilson	EVA
Lords	EVA
Jennet	RESERVE

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1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	EVA

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
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1 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	BIBINGKA

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
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1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	EVA
2	

Berma
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1	EVA
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

CitiMall
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1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1	ESKANDALOSA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
3 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	LORD OF THE RINGS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	ALI
3 (DOLBY)	SHALLOW HAL
4 (DTS)	RIDING IN CAR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	BIBINGKA
3	EVA
4 (DTS)	EARTHQUAKE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	LORD OF THE RINGS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

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1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

Olivarez Tagaytay
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1	VANILLA SKY
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	HINOG SA PILIT

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	THE OTHERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	ESKANDALOSA

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	ALI
2	13 GHOSTS
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	ESKANDALOSA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	ALI
4	13 GHOSTS

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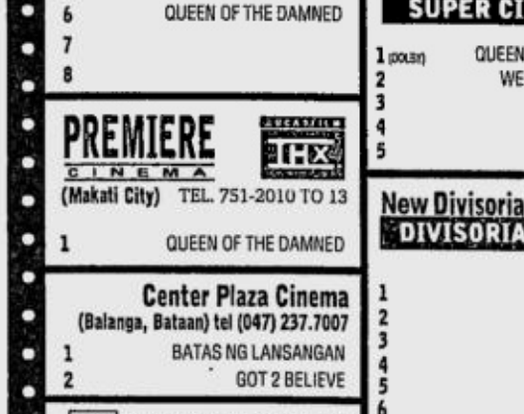

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6	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
10	THE SHIPPING NEWS

Ermita
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1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	THE SHIPPING NEWS
3	D-TOX
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Metro East - Marcos hway
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1	D-TOX
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	SHIPPING NEWS
4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	SHALLOW HAL

Novaliches
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1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	D-TOX
6	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7	THE SHIPPING NEWS
8	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN

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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BIBINGKA
3	D-TOX
4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
5	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	13 GHOSTS
5	MARSHALL DICK
6	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

Iloilo
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1	13 GHOSTS
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5	ESKANDALOSA
6	ALI

Star Mills- San Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961 5318 / 5270

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	ALI
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	IKAW LAMANG
5	13 GHOSTS
6	13 GHOSTS

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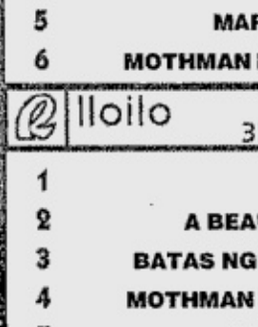

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Time for the PBA to rethink the poison in The Zone

THE FRIENDLY PBA man was apologetic.

Sorry, he said, but the other team, Hapee Toothpaste, plays it a lot better.

This was on Tuesday at the Philsports, formerly Ultra, in Pasig where the resurgent Sta. Lucia team was mauling the Selecta squad composed of aspirants to the RP national basketball team.

OK. The Hapee squad may indeed be playing better than Selecta. How well both squads have been adopting to international amateur rules was, of course, hard to tell.

Truth is, the Philippine Basketball Association visibly does not want what it's being made to do. Our pro stars have been dancing to a totally different tune. They are being made to play under purely amateur rules and to use the zone defense.

Result: They appear like frolicking rock practitioners left to do the *tinikling*. They appear lost.

***

It's not easy. Not only for the players on the dazed floor, but also for those who happen to know what the zone is all about.

You see, I have been an admirer of the zone the way the Koreans, Chinese and great European teams practice it to near perfection.

So, finally finding time, I dropped by at the Pasig hoophouse on Tuesday to watch our team of candidates do this new dance.

Please remember that when the PBA was born in 1975, the first thing they did was ban the zone defense.

Why? Because it had been perceived to be a boring stamp of amateur play.

Pro league founders insisted on the outright ban. They claimed the zone was not unlike slow poison that could ultimately kill their baby, the PBA.

***

Poison. But all our candidates for the RP national squad to the Asiad are now being made to take it. All for the simple reason that the zone, and the accompanying amateur regulations, will be the rule of thumb in Pusan come September.

In case you've forgotten, the main philosophy behind the zone is to protect the area, that wide spot defined by the keyhole figure immediately before the goal.

The zone, basically, is a fence, a defensive wall. That wall, at best, could heave, weave and throb like an amoeba.

Repeat, you've obviously forgotten what the zone was all about because it had been outlawed in the PBA.

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

That awful ban, in case you're wondering, was the reason we've failed to develop dependable outside gunners in the league of Narciso Bernardo, Adriano Papa and Jimmy Mariano.

Emphasis in our pro league was on drives, incursions, deemed to be colorful and exciting because these thrived on excessive individualism.

***

In the PBA today, players grope, struggle and claw.

Their newfound style, if you could call it that, could at best be described as somnambulistic.

They are ill at ease. They are not unlike worshippers herded into a different temple and made to follow the pure, strict, selfless rituals of a new religion.

In short, the national team candidates have to embrace a new philosophy. A new way of life, if you please.

What's doubly alarming though is that organizers have decided to skip foreign competition for the RP national team that will finally be formed at the end of the current conference.

Instead, the RP team, upon formation, will be let loose in the second conference, then it's onward to the Pusan Asian Games.

***

At Dinky's across the Philsports arena, where you can savor the finest *pulutan* this side of basketball town, I asked a panel of young but seasoned sportswriters about the new brand of play in the PBA.

Tito Talao, Dave Coros and company all had a big laugh.

If the national team candidates were doing it right, they chorused, then Ferdinand Marcos, together with Erap Estrada, would go down in history as the most honest president the Philippines has ever had.

Well, it's too early to tell. But here's a final suggestion.

If the PBA is serious about winning the basketball gold in Pusan, it should form the national right away. After that, the RP team must be made to face worthy opposition that has been honed on the strict ways of the zone.

Leaving the RP team to play and train against fellow slow learners in the PBA, who themselves can't make head or tail of the zone, could be worse than poison itself.

The RP national team could again end up half- baked.

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Auctions held as scheduled

ALLAYING fears that the auction of used imported heavy equipment and motor vehicles would be snagged by the controversy over the legitimacy of the auctioneering industry, the United Auctioneers Inc. said its auction would be held this week as scheduled.

UIA president Dominic Sytin assured patrons that the auction would take place despite the ongoing efforts by some quarters to demolish the auctioneering industry.

"Many have called us from Mindanao and the Visayas asking about the auction," Sytin said. "They were worried because of this brouhaha over the legitimacy of the auction industry."

Sytin also defended the auction of used importer cars and heavy equipment machinery as legitimate, saying they have been religiously complying with the requirements.

Agency snubs labor court's ₱170M ruling

'Not appropriate to talk about it now,' says ad official

By Alcuin Papa

EXECUTIVES in the Makati office of the multinational advertising giant WPP Marketing Communications, formerly known as J. Walter Thompson, yesterday snubbed the order of the National Labor Relations Commission to reinstate a dismissed executive.

The NLRC recently awarded P170 million in damages to the dismissed executive, Fil-American Jocelyn Galera.

The amount could be the largest award given to any employee seeking redress before the NLRC.

Galera, 46, who filed a complaint against the advertising agency last year for illegal dismissal, yesterday went to the WPP office at The Enterprise building on Ayala Avenue, together with her lawyer Edgar Francisco and NLRC-National Capital Region sheriff Rene Masilungan, so that Galera could return to her post as managing director of Mindshare Philippines, WPP's media division.

Mindshare officials, including chair Minda Lansang, refused to face Galera's party. Lansang was said to be in a board meeting.

"It's not appropriate to talk about that (Galera's case) because the case is still ongoing in court," Lansang later told the Inquirer in a telephone interview.

In his 27-page decision, which is now on appeal, NLRC arbiter Edgardo Madriaga ordered Galera's reinstatement after he found WPP to have illegally dismissed her in December 2000. Madriaga also ordered the WPP to pay Galera P170 million in damages representing back pay and moral damages.

Sheriff Masilungan left with the Mindshare receptionist a copy of Madriaga's writ of execution and a demand letter. He also gave Mindshare officials three days to show proof that they have reinstated Galera.

"If they refuse within the time period given, we will cite them for contempt, which carries a jail term," Masilungan said.

GALERA JOAN BONDOC

"If they don't follow the (NLRC's order), that is their right," Galera said.

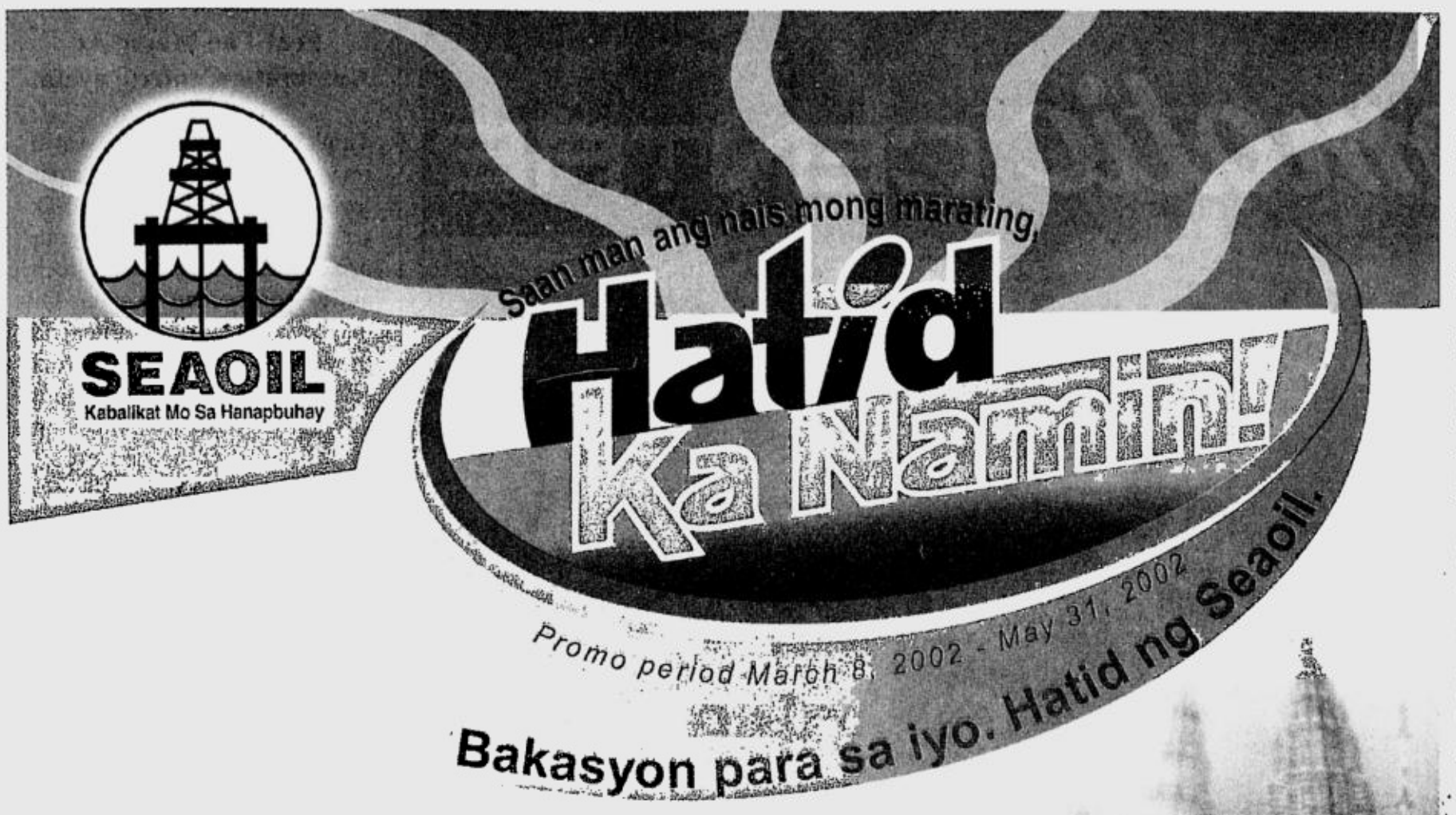
Mindshare did not allow visitors into their offices until Galera and her companions had left.

In his decision, arbiter Madriaga said Galera was not given due process in her termination.

"It is a written cardinal rule that the employer must furnish the employee with two written notices before termination of employment can be affected," the arbiter said. "(WPP) failed to observe the two-notice rule."

According to him, the law says any termination of employment must follow due process, or the termination may be declared defective and unlawful.

WPP Marketing Communications is a Fortune 500 company with more than 950 offices in 92 countries around the world.



Relatives...

From page A25

Barreiro is said to be identified with former GMA president Menardo "Nards" Jimenez, who retired from the network at the end of year 2002.

Insiders reportedly now fear that other executives close to Jimenez would also be eased out of the network.

Jimenez's son Butch, who was head of the creative services department, left the network several months after his father retired.

Felipe L. Gozon replaced Jimenez as president, and is also the chief executive officer and GMA marketing chair and CEO.

The source pointed out that Gozon is the brother of Kaye Gozon Jimenez, wife of the elder Jimenez.

Duavit's eldest son Jimmy is now GMA Network executive vice president and chief operating officer. Gozon also appointed him to supervise the TV Entertainment Department.

News and Public Affairs will be under the direct supervision of Gozon. His daughter Annette, a lawyer, is his secretary.

The source said Annette was the one who brought in several Mexican and Spanish telenovelas to the network. The titles include "Betty La Fea," "Lucia" and "Samantha."

Gozon announced on Tuesday Barreiro's suspension as senior vice president of the TV Group of GMA Network and as president and chief operating officer of GMA Marketing.

Gozon said in a statement that the suspension stemmed from his "loss of trust and confidence" in Barreiro. But he did not elaborate on the charges that led to Barreiro's suspension.

Another executive, lawyer Dan Albert de Padua, GMA vice president for network operations and programming, was reportedly told by Gozon to prepare an exit plan and to join Barreiro in leaving the station.

Barreiro is now consulting with his lawyers on his next move, but he continues to receive his pay from GMA until his case is resolved.

"We told ourselves that when the new president came in, we will be professional about it and work with him," said the source. "That's what we did."

A GMA board meeting is scheduled for today, and on top of the agenda is Barreiro's case, according to the source.

Gozon appointed Manuel P. Quioge, formerly COO of Studio 23, as OIC of the Office of the President and COO of GMA Marketing.

Barreiro has denied reports that he will move to ABC 5, but he admitted he is contemplating some offers. He will reportedly join a TV station to be put up by the elder Jimenez, who is now a board member of San Miguel Corp.

But Jimenez's son Butch who is now the corporate communications and public affairs head of PLDT, denied that his father would put up a TV station next year.

Jimenez still owns a 35-percent share in GMA-7. Gilberto Duavit Sr. owns another 35 percent, and Gozon has a 30-percent stake in the network.

PLDT's Manny Pangilinan was supposed to have bought a 60-percent share of the network last year, but the deal didn't materialize.

Barreiro is the son of the late Antonio Barreiro, one of the pillars of Philippine broadcasting and also a former executive of GMA 7.

The younger Barreiro was a TOYM awardee last December, together with Inquirer president Sandy Prieto Romualdez, pop idol Gary Valenciano and golf champ Dorothy Delasin, among others.

DOJ starts...

From page A25

failed to remit the Social Security System contributions of her housemaid, Bernardita Inocencio.

The charges fall under Article 116 of the Labor Code (withholding of wages) and the SSS rules on non-remittance of member's contributions by employers.

Sanchez is denying the charges, saying they were "baseless."

The charges were earlier filed with the Pasig City prosecutor's office but Inocencio moved to have the cases transferred to the DOJ to prevent Sanchez from influencing the outcome.

Inocencio, 42, also filed a case of slight physical injuries against Sanchez with the Makati City prosecutor's office. It is also undergoing preliminary investigation.

During yesterday's hearing, Inocencio told state prosecutor Roberto Lao that Sanchez withheld her salary from October to December 2001.

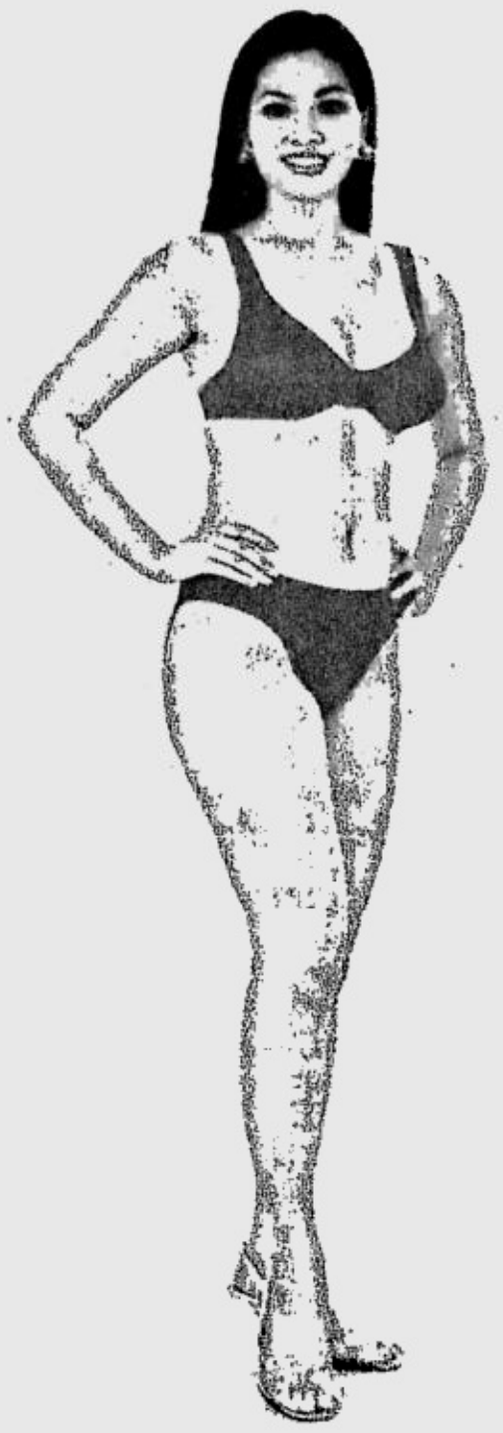
She said she started working for Sanchez on Sept. 27, 2001 until Sanchez and the broadcaster's supposed boyfriend, Paul Aquino, allegedly beat her up on Dec. 21, 2001. The incident allegedly occurred right inside Paul's house in Bel-Air, Makati.

"During the whole period I received only P3,500 representing my salary from Sept. 27 to Oct. 27," Inocencio said. "She gave it to me ten days later."

Lao and state prosecutor Mark Jalandoni ordered Sanchez's lawyer, Salvador Panelo, to submit a reply within five days.

Sanchez, whom Lao subpoenaed last week, did not show up yesterday. Instead, she went to the DOJ on Tuesday to submit her counter-affidavit.

Panelo said Sanchez could not attend the hearing yesterday because she had to fly to Germany.



PHOTOGRAPHERS' PICK
Bb. Pilipinas candidate Catherine Anne Ramos Manalo was the photographer's pick during the press presentation of the candidates held at the Century Park Hotel. Manalo, 22, graduated cum laude from Assumption College, where she completed a course in Mass Communications. She stands 5-foot-7 and weighs 128 pounds. She measures 36-26-36.

BRICKMAN'S BACK
Pianist-composer Jim Brickman (second from left) arrives for a two-night concert, "Simple Things," tonight and tomorrow night at the PICC Plenary Hall. Brickman is welcomed by concert producers Bernie Buenaseda of Vis-à-vis Entertainment (extreme left) and Jacob Fernandez of JLF Productions (third from left). Brickman is accompanied by his manager Michael Caprio (right). Special concert guests are Sharon Cuneta and Side A's Joey Generoso. ROGER MARGALLO

13 years of service ends in disgrace

By Philip C. Tubeza

MANILA prosecutor Pedro B. Salanga's 18-year-old career in government service ended on Wednesday when he was arrested for demanding P10,000 from a plaintiff in exchange for a favorable ruling.

Salanga, a 3rd Assistant City Prosecutor and resident of 8th Avenue, Caloocan City, was caught accepting P5,000 in marked money from complainant Cherry Anne Marie Eclarino, National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco said.

Ironically, the defendant was the inquest prosecutor in an unrelated extortion case which the NBI filed last week, Wycoco added.

Salanga allegedly asked for P10,000 from Joel B. Ferrer, Eclarino's counsel, in exchange for a favorable ruling on her slander and slight physical injuries complaint.

Wycoco said Salanga sent a text message on his cellular phone to Ferrer on March 9. The suspect told Ferrer to call him on his landline.

The victim's lawyer said Salanga asked him "how much money his client can shell out for a favorable decision."

Salanga again talked to Ferrer over the phone on March 11 and he asked if the cash was ready since he "needed the money badly."

The suspect allegedly asked for an "initial" down payment of P5,000. Salanga expected the balance to be paid once he issues a favorable decision, authorities said.

Ferrer, who told investigators that he had "a similar experience" with Salanga before, reported the matter to the NBI.

Agent Federico Criste and his colleagues in the NBI National Capital Region unit set up an entrapment on Wednesday in a coffee shop at SM Manila.

The NBI agents also prepared P2,000 in marked money for the operation, Wycoco said.

As planned, Salanga arrived and met with Ferrer.

NBI agents quickly pounced on Salanga when he received from Ferrer the marked money at the coffee shop on the mall's ground floor.

Filmfest entries limited to only 6

THE NUMBERS of entries in this year's revived Manila Film Festival has been narrowed down to 10, from the 42 scripts earlier submitted by various filmmakers. The 10 will be further reduced to the six, which will be featured in the film festival from June 12 to 25, during the week-long observance of Araw ng Maynila.

Among those chosen for possible inclusion in the final six are "Diskarte" by Maverick Films, "Magkapatid" by Viva Films, "Sweethearts" by Regal Films, "Munting Tinig" by Team Work Productions," "Utang ni Tatang" by World Arts Cinema;

"Super B Saves the day" by Neo Films, "Jologs" by Star Cinema, "Mama San" by FLT Films, "Yes Babe... Dat's My Daddy" by RVQ Productions and "Hanggang Saan" by Seven Crown Productions.

The screening committee is composed of former presidential political affairs adviser Lito Banayo, Councilors Alejandro "Kim" Atienza, Miles Roces, Luciano "Lou" Veloso and Martin Isidro Jr., Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila president Benjamin Tayabas, Raul Camaligan of SM Cinemas, Philippson Chua of Gotesco and June Rufino.

The screening committee is expected to come up with the final list of entries by the end of this week at the earliest, according to a press statement from the mayor's office.

Jerome Aning

Pasay looking at CCP Complex as new site for vendors

By Christian V. Esguerra

VENDORS at the Cultural Center of the Philippines?

The Pasay City government on Wednesday floated the idea of transferring around 400 hawkers to the CCP Complex to decongest the Baclaran area.

Florencio Mateo, chief of the Pasay traffic and parking bureau, said the local government is eyeing vacant lots near the Philippine International Convention Center in the CCP Complex as possible relocation site for vendors clogging up Taft Avenue in Baclaran.

"Right now the CCP Complex is our main option," Mateo told the INQUIRER when he took reporters on a tour of Baclaran. "But of course we have to talk to CCP management first before we can take action."

If the CCP approves the transfer of vendors, Mateo said the local government would furnish the hawkers with uniform stalls similar to those used by vendors in Manila.

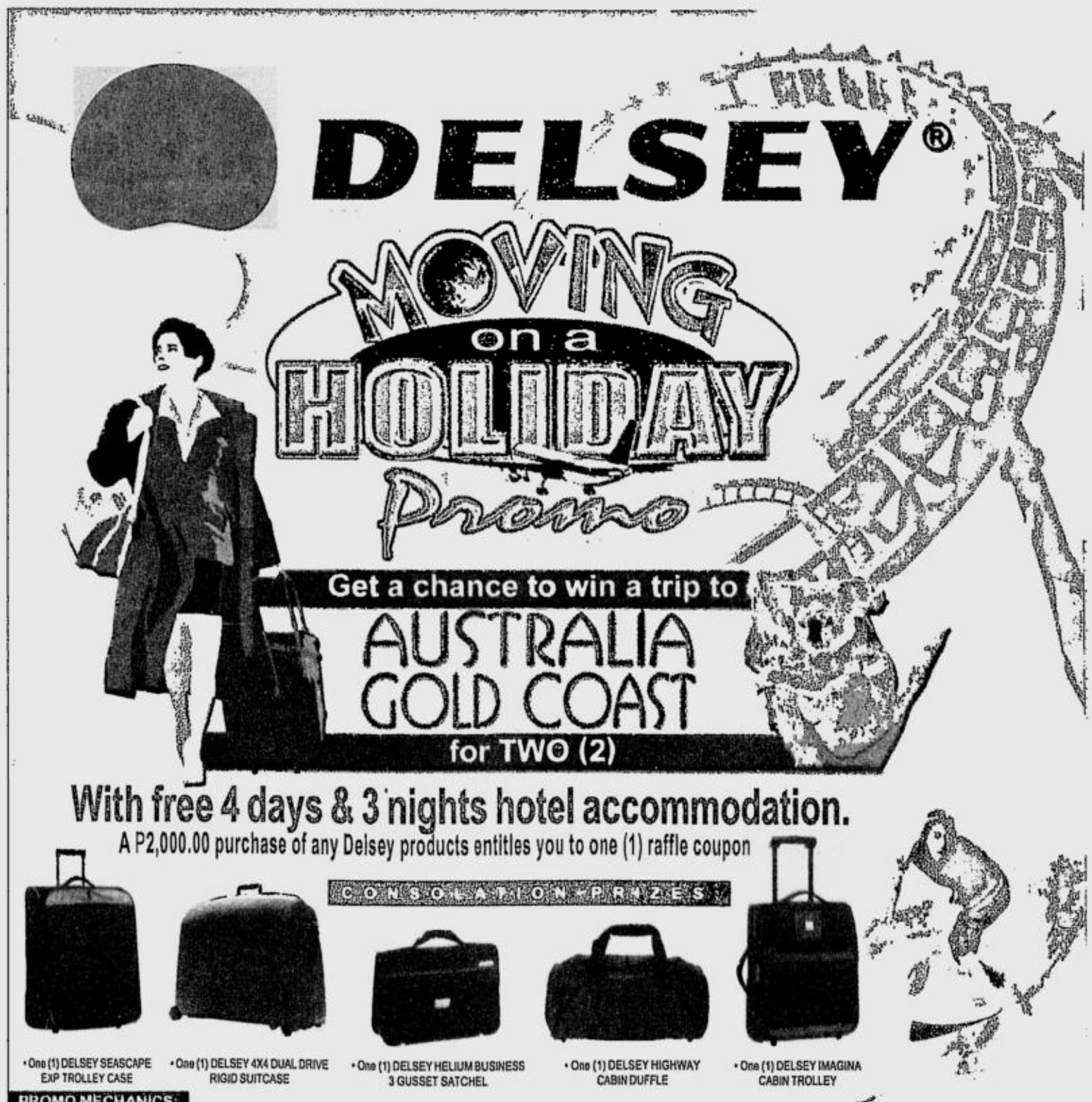
The relocation site will also be kept clean all the time, he said.

Late last month, the Pasay government began cleaning up the Baclaran area, which had long been occupied by vendors selling just about anything—from fake underwear to pirated audio and video compact discs and cheap appliances.

Around 30 policemen accompanied Mateo and his men to drive away the vendors from the streets and placed them in designated portions of sidewalks where they could sell their wares.

Members of Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad's clean-up team and other support groups are keeping watch in the area to prevent vendors from returning to the streets.

While he admitted that hawking in the streets is illegal, Mateo said he and his men could not just drive vendors out of the area since "they are also protected by certain groups."



'STEPSISTERS'
Stand-up comedians Leonard Obal and Phillip Lazaro reprise their roles in the hit series "Stepsisters," 9:30 tonight at Comic Lab in J. Bocobo St. Malate, Manila. The show is written and directed by Andrew de Real.

'Concert at the Park'

THE CHINA Traditional Cultural Festival on "Concert at the Park," which coincided with the 4th Chinese Spring Lantern Festival presented last Feb. 24, will be aired 11 tonight on NBN 4.

The Spring Lantern Festival is a Chinese tradition held every 15th day of the Lunar New Year.

SHOWS

Classical concert

AFTER returning from his successful concert at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Chicago, multi-awarded singer-composer Jose Mari Chan produces a classical piano concert, "An Evening of Classical Romance," featuring Korean artist Min Kwon, at 8 tonight at the Francisco Santiago Hall of the Equitable PCI Bank Tower I on Makati Avenue.

KOREAN pianist Min Kwon.

This is not Chan's first venture as an impresario. In 1981, he brought pop music star Michael Johnson to the Folk Arts Theater.

For tickets to the Min Kwon concert, call Judy or Lilibeth at 817-1551 or the MCO Office at 813- 3849.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	EBE LASON KAY ADAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	D - TOX
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	BIBINGKA
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	D TOX
CINEMA-12	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BEAUTIFUL MIND

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	D-TOX
CINEMA-2	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-5	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL

D-TOX - R 18 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00	ROYAL TENENBAUMS - P 13 12:00, 2:20, 4:40, 7:00, 9:30	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 1:00, 4:00, 6:55, 9:50
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED - P 13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	SHIPPING NEWS - P 13 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:10	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00, 11:00

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri., 11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings. Free Seating.

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G1 (GLORIETTA 1)	G4 (GLORIETTA 4)	GB1 (GREENBELT 1)	ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)
1 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED	1 WE WERE SOLDIERS	4 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE	1 THE SHIPPING NEWS
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS	2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND	5 D-TOX	2 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3 D-TOX	3 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED (GUARANTEED SEATS)	6 THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS	3 THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE		7 THE SHIPPING NEWS	4 ILLUSIONE MARCH 14,15,16 (Onstage)
			1 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED (THX)
			2 THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS
			3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
			4 THE SHIPPING NEWS
			5 WE WERE SOLDIERS

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
The Ayala Events
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU

THE MURRAY RAINE PUPPET SHOW
MAKATI
March 22, 23 & 24 - 4:30pm, 5:30pm & 6:30pm
At the Glorietta 4 Park
For inquiries, call 816-3396
ALABANG
March 15, 16 & 17 - 11:00am, 3:30pm, & 5:30pm
At the Activity Center
For inquiries, call 842-2782
10-sol 10 Mallwide Sale - March 15, 16 & 17
CEBU
March 8 - 5:30pm, 6:30pm, & 7:30pm
March 9 - 3:30pm, 6:30pm, & 5:30pm
March 10 - 11:30am, 4pm, & 6pm
At the Activity Center
For inquiries, call 318-5142 loc. 8
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JAMES DEAN
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FLEXUS
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VERVE
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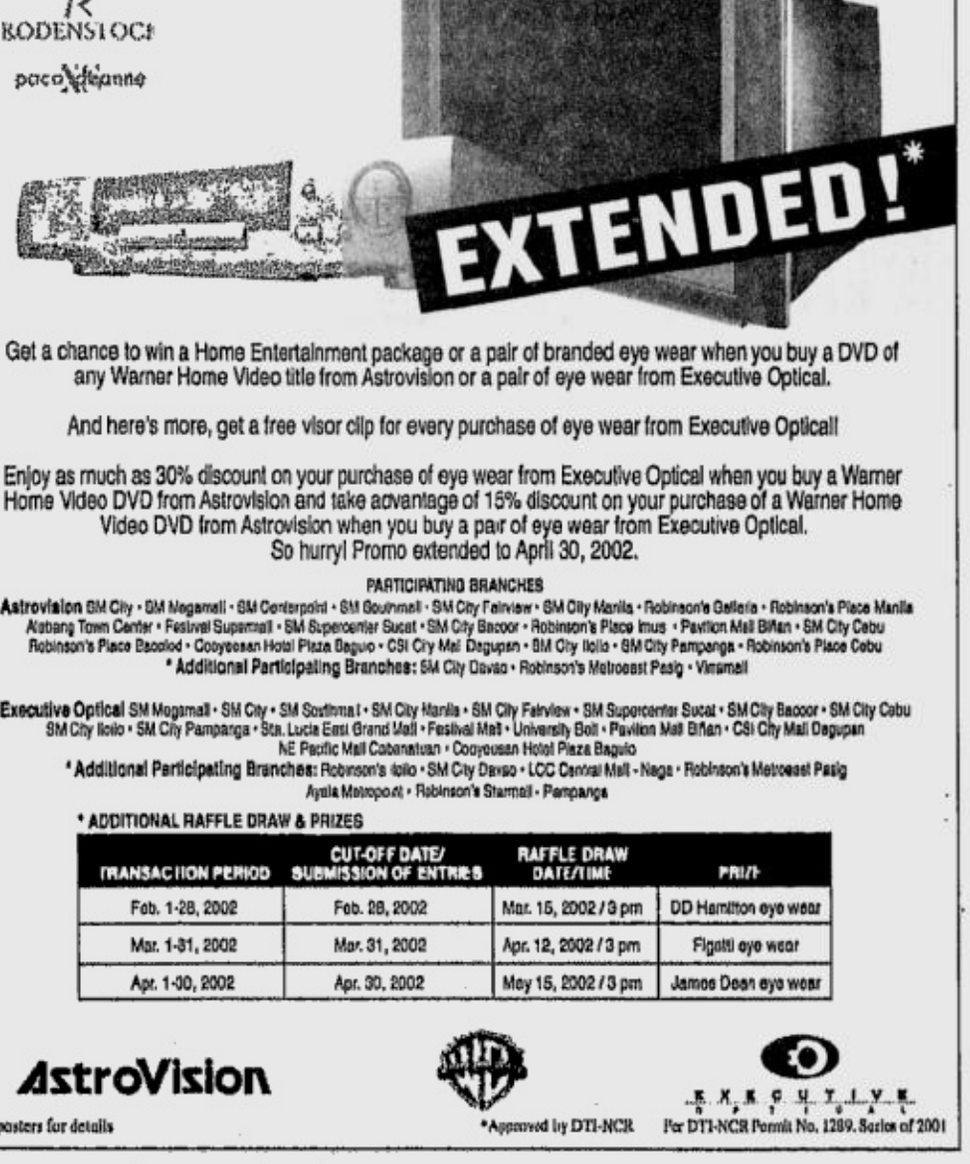
RODENSTOCK
pacoVidanne



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* Additional Participating Branches: Robinson's Iloilo • SM City Davao • LCC Central Mall - Naga • Robinson's Metroeast Pasig Ayala Metropoint • Robinson's Starmall • Pampanga

* ADDITIONAL RAFFLE DRAW & PRIZES

TRANSACTION PERIOD	CUT-OFF DATE/ SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES	RAFFLE DRAW DATE/TIME	PRIZE
Feb. 1-28, 2002	Feb. 28, 2002	Mar. 15, 2002 / 3 pm	DD Hamilton eye wear
Mar. 1-31, 2002	Mar. 31, 2002	Apr. 12, 2002 / 3 pm	Figatti eye wear
Apr. 1-30, 2002	Apr. 30, 2002	May 15, 2002 / 3 pm	James Dean eye wear

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Arnold is modern-day 'hero' for 'Emergency' viewers

SINCE **Arnold Clavio** was given a break on TV in the early '90s, after doing radio for several years, he has shown no let-up in the many challenges he has encountered.

Whether it's a life-threatening coverage like in the Abu Sayyaf's lair in Basilan or a heart-rending feature about juvenile cancer patients, Arnold gives it a hundred percent of his time, effort and knowledge.

"The Abu Sayyaf coverage was my first assignment on TV," Arnold shares. "At that time, I was not really afraid that I could get killed. I was more worried that I would be out-scooped by the other reporters. My main concern was to deliver."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

The most difficult coverage for him, however, was the Edsa 3 rally when former President **Joseph Estrada** was arrested.

"I was accused by Erap loyalists of being biased," he says. *"Sinipa ako at binato.* I couldn't go out for several days after that."

But the episode closest to his heart is that of the juvenile cancer victims. "After I did it, I kept on asking, 'Why does it have to be them?," he says. "There are corrupt men out there who are literally the 'cancer' of society. They should have been the ones to suffer."

Arnold has also gotten his share of death threats when he was pursuing the Vizconde massacre case. But that didn't daunt him from delivering the news.

No wonder Arnold is known for his fearless reportage, whether on radio or TV.

He hosts the weekly public affairs program, "Emergency" and also the daily morning show, "Unang Hirit." He also anchors a daily morning radio program on *dzBB*, GMA's AM station.

Arnold rose from the ranks to earn his niche in broadcasting. In 1987, he started out as a radio reporter on *dwIZ* after completing his journalism course at the University of Sto. Tomas. **Bobby Guanzon** later convinced him to move to *dzBB*

From radio, Arnold was given a chance by former GMA executive **Tony Seva** to contribute to "GMA Balita." In 1994, **Jessica Soho** recommended him to do field reporting for "Brigada Siete," then hosted by the late **Louie Beltran.**

In 1998, Arnold was given his own program on *dzBB* with **Ali Sotto**. They took over from the slot of **Mel Tiangco** and **Jay Sonza.**

"Tita Mel had to give up morning radio due to heart problems," Arnold explains.

However, when Ali resigned and moved to Mexico to join her husband, Arnold went solo on daily morning AM radio.

"I find everything a challenge," Arnold says of his work. "In 'Unang Hirit,' I get to do news features. On radio, I get to tackle issues of the day and in 'Emergency,' I get to do public service."

Arnold takes pride in having helped a number of people through "Emergency," one of the long-running news and public affairs programs on GMA.

"We all get satisfaction and fulfillment knowing that our job in 'Emergency' saves lives, despite the hidden dangers we encounter," says Arnold, who has adopted the moniker "Igan."

However, what seems heroic to viewers is just all in a day's work for "Emergency," which airs Fridays, 11 p.m. after "Frontpage."

But that does not make the program any less valiant. The efforts of the host, staff and production crew are definitely laudable. And for the people they have helped, "Igan" Arnold and his "Emergency" staff are the modern-day "heroes."

Both "Emergency" and its host have received several awards in the past. Just recently, the show became finalist for best public affairs program in the New York TV Festivals, for the "Mendiola Special." In 1997, "Emergency" was also a finalist in the same awards ceremony for its "GMA Live Countdown to 1997."

In 1998, "Emergency" won best in TV reportage for "Salot ng Siglo" in the AIDS Media Awards, which also accorded the program's AIDS special the best in TV news feature award in 2000.

Arnold, for his part, seems to build a veritable gallery of plaques and trophies for his awards.

In 1994, he clinched the best radio report of a crisis from the Asian Broadcasting Union for his Abú Sayyaf Story.

In 1995, Arnold won best TV reportage on AIDS from AIDS Media Awards for the "Sarah Jane Salazar Story."

In 2001, he was named outstanding morning show host for "Unang Hirit" by the Star Awards for TV of the Philippine Movie Press Club (PMPC).

Last year, he also won a special citation from the Catholic Mass Media Awards for his "Angelo Mawanay Story" and the Gawad Metro Manila Radio Reporters Organization conferred on him the Bagong Dugo ng Dekada Award.

CLAVIO. Finds challenge in everything he does

BRICKMAN. Holds a two-night concert in Manila

Personal choice

WHEN pianist-composer **Jim Brickman** was asked to do a two-night concert in Manila, he only had one choice for a guest performer and that is megastar **Sharon Cuneta**.

Sharon recorded two compositions by Brickman in her latest album, "All I Ever Want," her debut for BMG Records Pilipinas.

The songs are "Where's the Good in Goodbye" and "In Your Eyes," a duet with Chinese music superstar **Andy Lau**. Both were recorded in Hong Kong.

For her part, Sharon readily gave her nod to sing Brickman's compositions in the latter's two-night concert at the PICC, March 15 and 16.

Sharon will render other hits penned by Brickman like "Your Love," "Valentine," "By Heart" and a new song that Brickman especially wrote for Sharon to sing in the show.

Another guest is Side A vocalist **Joey Generoso**, who will croon Brickman originals like "The Gift," "Love of My Life" and "In a Lover's Eyes," (originally recorded by **Ariel Rivera** in his "Getting To Know You" album).

Brickman's choice for Sharon to guest in his concert is understandable. They bonded really well when they recorded the two songs for Sharon's album in Hong Kong in 2000.

"Where's the Good in Goodbye" is now enjoying massive airplay and has made Sharon's album turn gold (with 20,000 copies sold) in only a short time.

"Sharon is an extremely warm spirit with a talent that is unique," Brickman says of the megastar. "In addition to a glorious voice and musical talent, she is one of the most generous collaborators. She gives so much during a collaboration and she is so willing to work.

"It is always a joy working with Sharon. She is fun, but most of all, she is very professional, with a tremendous ability to bring another level to my songs."

Brickman's "Simple Things" concert is also meant to promote his latest album of the same title under BMG Records. The two-night show is mounted by Vis-à-Vis Entertainment Corp., with JLF Organization.

Brickman arrived Wednesday night with his road manager **Michael Caprio**. The two are billeted in separate executive suites at Hyatt Regency, official residence of the Brickman concert.

Brilliant strategy

From page A32

* * *

Quizmaster: What movie starring **Mel Gibson** has "heart" in its title?

Contestant: "America's Sweethearts."

(No, "Braveheart.")

* * *

Quizmaster: *Ang* filly *ay babaing —?*

Contestant: *Pagong!* (Wrong.) *Ibon!* (Wrong again.)

(No, horse.)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Sa* World War Two, *ang Makapili ay naglingkod sa anong bansa?*

Contestant: *Pilipinas!*

(No, Japan.)

* * *

Quizmaster: *Anong May isang bahay-dasalan ng mga* Muslim?

Contestant: Mecca!

(No, mosque.)

Fashion shows at Ever-Gotesco

EVER Department Store holds a "2002 Summer Fashion Show," featuring a collection of summer and swim wear, March 16 and 23, 4:30 p.m. at Ever Commonwealth and Grand Central, respectively.

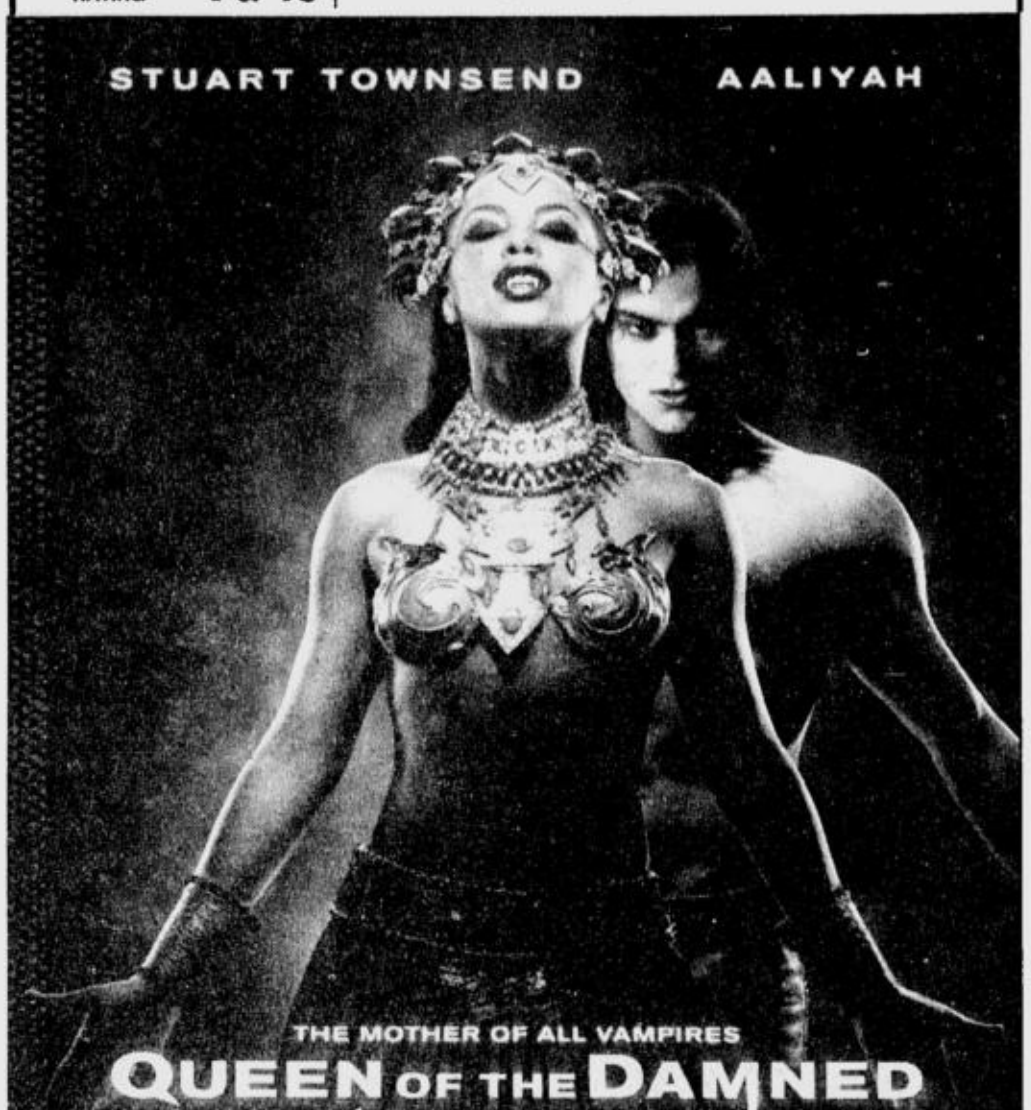
Shoppers are in for cool savings of as much as 50 percent on selected quality items in the summer fever sale, March 15 to 17, at Ever Gotesco Malls in Recto, Grand Central, Commonwealth and Ortigas.

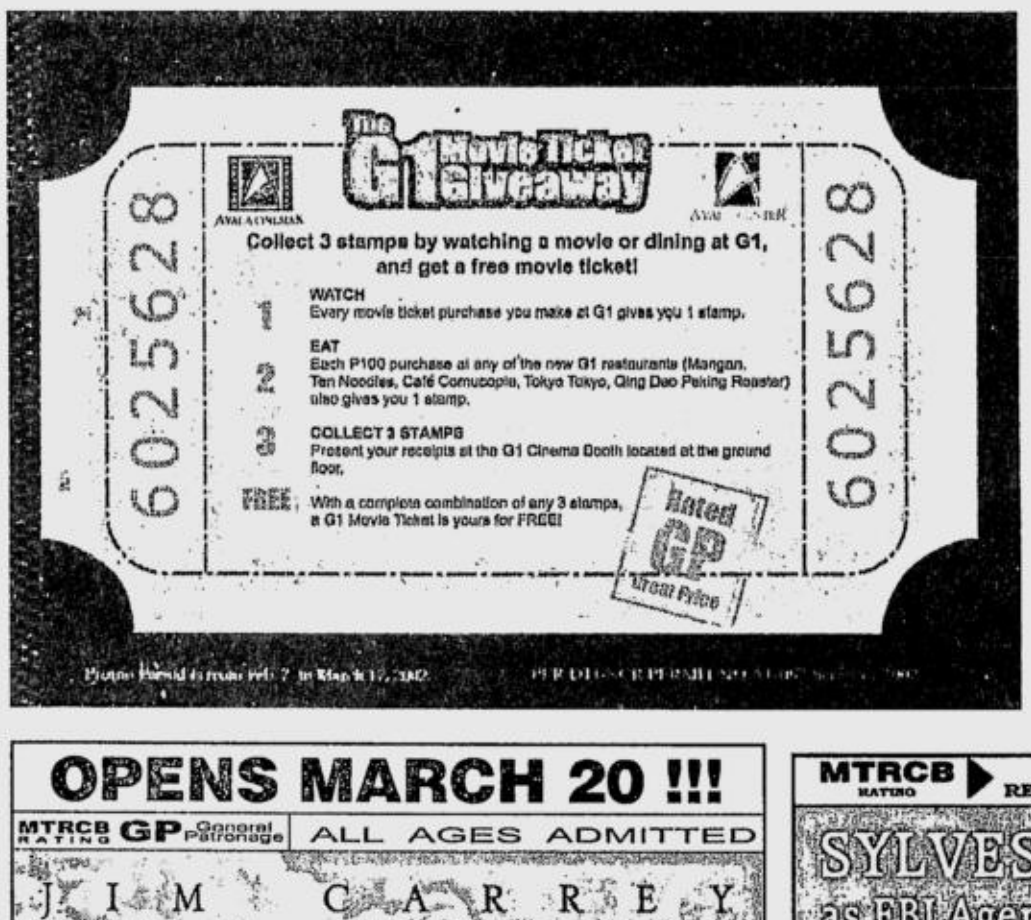
Graduating students of advertising and public relations of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) will present a tri-media advertising campaign competition called "Ad Clash," March 16, 1 p.m. at Ever Ortigas.

The project will focus on advocacy advertising, with Ever-Gotesco Malls as client.

On March 17, 5 p.m., heartthrob Onemig Bondoc will be featured in the "Summer Fashion Frolics" fashion show by Bunny Jeans and Shirts at Ever Ortigas.

Simultaneously at 3 p.m. at Ever Commonwealth, Imelda Papin will launch her latest album, "Nag-iisang Imelda." She returns on March 23, 3 p.m. at Ever Ortigas.





ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Alma's 'friend' Julian did not wear Joey's shirt

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

I'D LIKE to make a clarification with regard to a statement that was misinterpreted by a majority of viewers during my exclusive interview with Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez, aired on "The Buzz" last Sunday.

When Joey was annotating "video evidence" to show that Julian Say (the alleged boyfriend of Joey's wife Alma Moreno) was present on stage during a Paranaque festival, Joey said, "He's even wearing my t-shirt."

What the mayor meant was that Julian was wearing a campaign or festival giveaway t-shirt.

A lot of people told me they were shocked that Julian could be wearing a shirt that belonged to Joey.

I reiterate: Joey merely pointed out that Julian was wearing a shirt identical to what everybody else on that stage was wearing, a giveaway from the mayor's office, and not literally a t-shirt from the mayor's wardrobe.

That interview took nearly a month to get. Now it can be told that immediately after Alma had said her piece, in my co-host Boy Abunda's exclusive with her aired Feb. 10, *Tito* Douglas Quijano scheduled a taping for me to interview Joey, to address the allegations that cropped up during Alma's interview. The interview with Joey was initially set for Feb. 15.

While I was in Boracay celebrating my birthday, *Tito* Douglas called to cancel and he asked if we could reschedule for the following week. We again made an appointment for Feb. 23, but a couple of hours before the interview's taping, *Tito* Douglas called to say that out of *delicadeza*, Joey couldn't do our interview because Alma's mother had just passed away.

On March 1, I had a meeting with Mayor Joey. I think that although I'm a close friend of *Tito* Douglas, Joey wanted to ascertain how impartial I'd be when talking to him on-cam. We finally taped the interview on Thursday, March 7, and it was aired March 10.

We patiently held on to the opportunity to have the exclusive because for a show like "The Buzz," you have no choice but to wait it out until the people involved in the hottest controversy of the day are ready to open up to you. The competition is such that the show that gets the exclusive is ultimately the winner in the ratings game.

More coverage

Is that the end of their saga? I seriously doubt it. Our insatiable curiosity regarding the romantic travails of celebrities and politicians will insure much more coverage of their uncoupling.

I should know, because three years after my split-up with Phillip Salvador, regardless of the fact that we in fact were never married, I'm still mentioned in the same breath whenever there's even a brief news item about him. The latest item was about his having a new girlfriend, and she purportedly looks like me.

Oh, well, as they say, fame does come at a price. Seriously, though, I realized I was at a pretty good place in my life when I didn't react negatively to this news and I was able to joke about it with Boy. I can now wish Phillip well, and I was glad to hear from Josh's *yaya* that Phillip had lost weight and was looking trim. After all, his career as an action star demands that he does look as fit as possible.

Cliché

For the life of me, however, I can't go to the extent of saying that for as long as he's happy, then I'll be happy. I find it strange whenever I hear people utter that cliché, because an ex-partner's happiness in all honesty would no longer have a significant bearing on your own state of well being.

Let's be frank. Your happiness, or mine in particular, would be the result of a faithful relationship with God, a peaceful and healthy home, a fulfilling career, loyal, fun, and sincere friends, and a stable, supportive, and romantic relationship.

After all, it's safe to presume that you did split up primarily because you were miserable while together. So now that you're apart, how would his being happy make you happy? The statement sounds altruistic, but definitely it's a bit hard to swallow.

Brilliant strategy

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

IN the '50s and '60s, young viewers' growing-up years were made more adventurous, melodramatic and visually exciting by the swashbuckling costume spectacular that they watched in their neighborhood theaters.

Some of them starring the athletic, roguish and gleaming-toothed likes of **Errol Flynn** and **Burt Lancaster**, those cinematic swashbucklers bore such titles as "Captain Blood," "The Sea Hawk," "The Master of Ballantrae," "The Pirate"—and "The Count of Monte Cristo."

"Monte Cristo" was a particular favorite because it was written by **Alexandre Dumas** and told the especially affecting story of an innocent man who was wrongly put behind bars, where he thought up a brilliant strategy to avenge himself against those who had cruelly betrayed him.

The good news is that the film has been given a new production for today's audience. The 1936 original version starred **Robert Donat**, the 1954 French production topbilled **Jean Marais**, and the 1975 revival had **Richard Chamberlain** playing the title role.

This time around, the 2002 "Monte Cristo" has **Jim Caviezel** portraying the dashing, young sailor Edmond Dantes, whose plan to marry the beautiful Mercedes (**Dagmara Domincyk**) are shattered when his best friend Fernand (**Guy Pierce**), who wants Mercedes for himself, deceives him.

After languishing in prison for 13 years, he solicits the help of another inmate (**Richard Harris**) to escape from jail, and transforms himself into the wealthy and mysterious Count of Monte Cristo. He then cleverly and systematically destroys the man who enslaved him.

TV-film scriptwriting workshop

AWARD-winning writer and director **Joey Reyes** will hold his first TV-film scriptwriting workshop for three days and two nights (March 22-24) at the Tamaraw Beach Resort, Aninuan, Puerto Galera. Registration is on March 16 and 17. Call 925-7566 or 439-4325.

Reyes has scripted many acclaimed films and TV shows and has also directed numerous outstanding TV-film productions.

Comedy of quiz-show errors

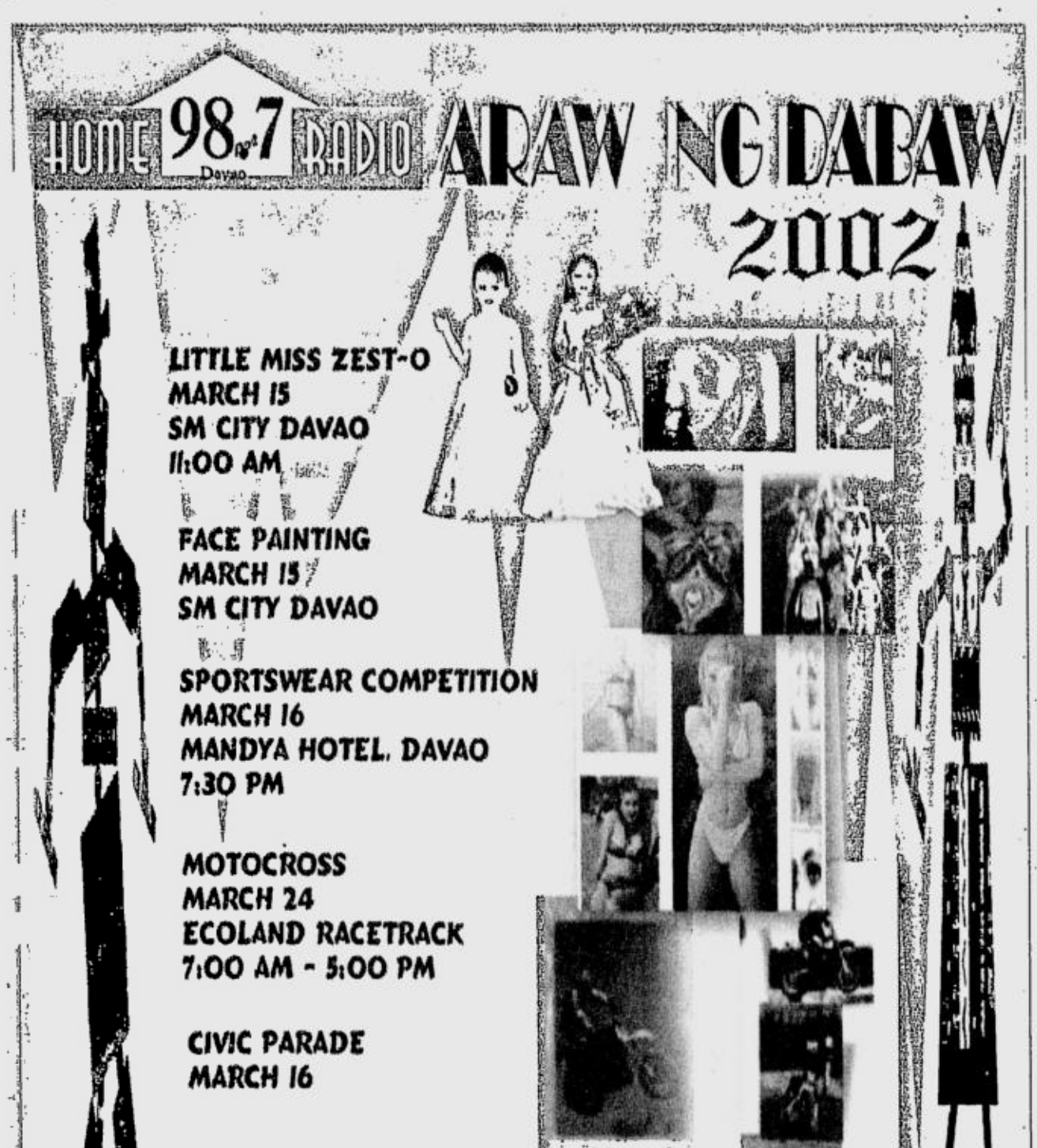
QUIZMASTER: *Ano ang bagay na gawa sa metal na sinusuot?*

Contestant: *Sapatos.*

(Ouch!)

BRILLIANT/ A31

Catch the Kit Kat gimmick booths at selected cinemas. FREE movie tickets for the 1st 100 moviegoers.



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FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2002

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

B1

Bangko Sentral cuts rates to 10-yr low

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday reduced its policy rates by another quarter-of-a percentage point to its lowest level in 10 years.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura, pleased with the outcome of the monetary meeting yesterday, hinted that the third cut in the overnight rates this year might not be the last as the central bank seeks to support the government's growth objectives.

"We believe that this policy move would help create conditions for promoting increased bank lending activities and help propel domestic demand," he said.

Banks should bring down their lending rates while borrowers should have an easier time servicing their obligations as a result of the BSP's decision. The BSP rates and the treasury bill yields are used by banks in pricing their loans.

The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate fell to an all-time low of 6.714 percent during last Monday's auction.

The BSP's overnight rates are now down to 7 percent for borrowing and 9.25 percent for lending, the lowest since 1992. Yesterday's reduction was the third cut this year and brought to 7.75 percentage points the cumulative decline in the policy rates since December 2000.

"You never say last," said Buenaventura when asked whether the overnight rates have reached bottom.

He pointed to a generally favorable inflation outlook as the deciding factor in yesterday's cut and the basis for future monetary decisions. Inflation in February hit its lowest in 23 months at 3.4 percent as against a full-year target of 5 to 6 percent.

This inflation target may be adjusted to a range of 4.5 to 5.5 percent in the next two months, underpinned by stable food and oil prices, a steady exchange rate, and soft demand and excess inventory, Buenaventura added.

The BSP governor pointed out that most banks have reduced their lending charges by 8.56 percentage points since December 2000, a rate outpacing the central bank's cuts.

However, some quarters viewed the banks' cut in lending as insufficient given the significant decline in the benchmark interest rates.

"The cut should also help ease the pressure on the banks' bad loans and create conditions for a more vigorous bank lending," he said.

Buenaventura pointed out that the BSP had tightened its policies

BANGKO/ B5

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.92 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 14, 2002

¥128.88 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 14, 2002

GOLD: $292.90/293.40

per ounce Hong Kong, March 14, 2002

SCRATCHA NUMBA

PROMO MECHANICS

1. Get a game card for every ₱300 single or accumulated receipt purchase of fuel; ₱100 single or accumulated receipt purchase of lubricants ; ₱100 single receipt purchase at Star Mart; or ₱250 single receipt purchase of LPG.

2. There are two (2) ways to win cash prizes:

Instant Cash:

a. Scratch off the 3 boxes on the scratch card to reveal the 3-digit number combination. Each digit is printed in words at the bottom.

b. Match the 3-digit no. combination with the winning *Caltex Scratcha Numba* combination announced every Monday, Wednesday and Friday between March 18 & June 7, 2002 in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Philippine Star and posted in all participating Caltex stations. The March 29 (Good Friday) announcement will be moved to March 31 (Easter Sunday). Announcements in local dailies will be made every Saturday within the same period, except on March 30 (Black Saturday).*

c. If the number combination on your game card matches any of the announced winning number combinations in exactly the same order (Ex. 018 does not match 081), you win exactly the cash equivalent of the 3-digit number printed on the card. (Ex. If your number combination is 999 you win ₱999 or if your number combination is 020 you win ₱20)

d. Cash prizes can be claimed at participating Caltex stations from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm, upon surrender of the winning game card.

e. Game cards are subject to validation by the authorized Caltex station representative. Only winning cards with authenticated security code will be honored. Crumpled, defaced and torn game cards or those with scratched security code ("void if scratched" box) will be disqualified.

f. Cash prizes must be claimed within 60 days from the end of the promo period. All unclaimed prizes will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., with prior approval of DTI.

g. Employees of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., participating Caltex stations, McCann-Erickson (Phils.), Inc., Caltex promotions agencies, suppliers, and all their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the instant promo.

Raffle Draw:

a. Scratch off the raffle box on the scratch card to reveal the cash prize you can win in the raffle. The amount printed on it should be any of the ff: *₱1 million, ₱5 million* or *₱10 million* only.

b. Indicate/write your name, address, tel. no. and/or cell. no. on the raffle stub and sign it. Then drop it in drop boxes located at any of the participating Caltex stations.

c. There will be one (1) raffle draw with (3) winners. If your raffle entry is drawn, you can win exactly the same amount indicated on your drawn winning raffle entry. You can win as much as ₱10 million only.

d. A customer can win only once in the raffle draw. If a name is drawn more than once, the customer shall get the bigger prize.

e. Last day of submission of raffle entries is on June 15, 2002 at 12:00 pm. The Raffle draw will be held on June 30, 2002. The venue and time shall be submitted to DTI and announced two (2) weeks before the draw.

f. All winners will be notified through registered mail.

g. Raffle prizes can be claimed upon presentation of two (2) proper identifications (e.g., driver's license, passport, etc.) and the notification letter.

h. Raffle prizes can be claimed at 7/F 6750 Ayala Ave., 1226 Makati City, Philippines from Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm only.

i. Raffle prizes must be claimed within 60 days upon notification. All unclaimed prizes will be forfeited in favor of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., with prior approval of DTI.

j. The 20% withholding tax on prizes worth ₱1,000,000.00 will be paid for by Caltex (Philippines) Inc. For prizes exceeding ₱1,000,000.00, the winner shall shoulder the 20% withholding tax.

k. Employees of Caltex (Philippines) Inc., participating Caltex stations, McCann-Erickson (Phils.), Inc., Caltex promotions agencies, suppliers and all their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.

3. Promo period is from March 15, 2002 to June 15, 2002.

*Approved by DTI-NCR.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.0245 Series of 2002.

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- Win as much as ₱10 million in the June 30, 2002 grand draw!

Up to ₱45 Million at stake!

Hurry! Promo period is from March 15, 2002 to June 15, 2002.

Announcement of winning numbers in Philippine Daily Inquirer & Philippine Star will now be made every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from March 18 to June 7, 2002, except on March 29 (Good Friday).*

*Approved by DTI-NCR.

SCRATCHA NUMBA

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0245 Series of 2002.

What Drives You CALTEX

MEET WITH GMA

Foreign business to seek solution to old woes

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE CHIEFS of the various foreign business chambers in the Philippines are set to converge in Malacañang today to urge the President to step up her efforts in addressing the rise in kidnappings in Metro Manila, increasing labor unrest, and chronic infrastructure problems.

A source said that officials and members of the Joint Foreign Chambers of the Philippines Inc. were hoping that a personal meeting with the President would show her how serious these issues were to foreign investors.

The source said that foreign businessmen continued to fear for their personal safety in Metro Manila as kidnapping syndicates became more daring despite the President's order for the Philippine National Police to crack down on this illicit activity. The targets of these syndicates have expanded from Filipino-Chinese businessmen to include Japanese, Koreans, Americans and Europeans over the last 12 months.

Also, foreign businessmen were alarmed over the rise in labor activism in the past 12 months which has disrupted the operations of multinational corporations in the Philippines such as Toyota Motor, Nissan Motor and Nestle.

One of the affected MNCs lamented the government's reluctance to act decisively on what should be clear-cut labor rules because of political considerations.

The source said the foreign chambers were getting impatient over how little the government has moved forward in resolving these problems since they voiced out these concerns to the President last year.

Aside from security and labor issues, the foreign chambers want to follow up on the government's efforts to improve the country's infrastructure bottlenecks specifically in port services, telecommunications and land transportation.

Expected to participate in today's meeting are officers of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Australian-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines Inc., Korean Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc. and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters Inc.

Buenaventura says country needs to overcome inertia to become tiger

THE COUNTRY must overcome its inertia if it wants to catch up with its Asian neighbors in growth and development, Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

"We need to get out of a box that has held our minds and psyche hostage, prevents us from seeking our true potential as a nation," Buenaventura said in a keynote address at the annual meeting of the Philippine Economic Society.

He said Filipinos, nearly 40 percent of whom are trapped in poverty, liked focusing on what they could not do instead of exploring the many options available to achieve their goals.

"A favorite pastime is self-flagellation," Buenaventura said.

"Mistakes are glorified. Problems dominate conversations with little or no attention spent in coming up with real solutions. There is a perception that problems will find their own solutions," he said.

He noted that while historical economic growth in the Philippines had been steady and sustained, the country never seemed to grow at rates that matched its potential.

The Philippines has vast natural tourist wonders and resources, including the skills of its people.

"Yet, somehow, and I am troubled by this, we can't seem to overcome our inertia," he said.

"We need to overcome this cultural peculiarity because other than that, we have all that it takes to become a tiger economy," Buenaventura said.

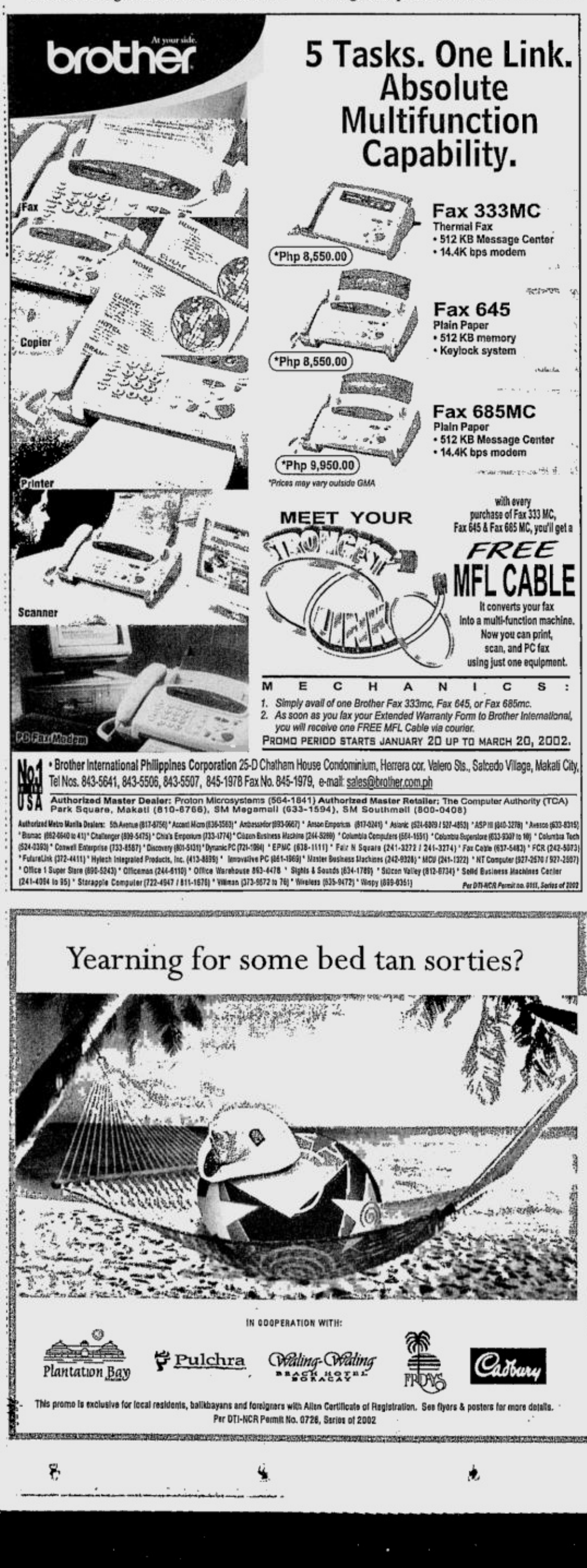
He urged Filipinos to work hard and called for greater perseverance and professionalism.

The Philippines has been growing at an annual average of 3 to 4 percent over the last 25 years, much slower than many of its neighbors.

Last year, the Philippines did well relative to its Asian neighbors, chalking up 3.4-percent economic growth.

"But as the economy improves, we should be up there with the rest of the other nations, growing at 5 percent or better," Buenaventura told reporters later.

Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas said the economy could expand by between 3.8 and 4.3 percent in the first quarter of 2002 from a year earlier, compared with growth of 3.8 percent in the fourth quarter of last year. *AFP*



Napocor losses seen to increase by 227% this year

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Power Corp. yesterday said its losses this year could go up by 227 percent from P10.4 billion in 2001 due largely to the separation benefits it would have to pay some 8,800 employees and other related expenses when the power firm's privatization was implemented.

Napocor officer in charge-president Roland S. Quilala said separation benefits for the company's 8,800 employees alone would already amount to P12.9 billion.

The Electric Power Industry Reform Act requires the payment to Napocor employees of a severance pay equivalent to one-and-a-half month's salary for every year of service.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said these expenses were also the reason why Napocor's funding needs could go up this year to $1 billion.

"It has not been decided whether Napocor or the national goverment would raise this," Perez said.

Napocor's debt servicing requirements for some $800 million-$900 million in liabilities accounted for the bulk of its $1-billion financial requirement this year.

These loans were contracted during the height of the power crisis in the country in the early 1990s and were used to fund power generation and transmission projects.

The national government has secured $750 million for Napocor. However, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has yet to come out with a plan on who to raise the balance of the requirement.

Of the $750 million, $250 million was raised when Napocor piggy-backed on the government's $500-million borrowing in January.

The government early this week raised $1 billion more, half of which will go to the power firm.

Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso said Psalm would not need to raise more funds until the second half of the year.

"We will not know the actual amount that Napocor needs until June or July," Del Fonso said.

What's new on labor contracting?

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

THERE is an alarmist's tendency among us every time the government issues a new rule. Department of Labor and Employment Order No. 18-02 signed by Labor Secretary Pat Sto. Tomas on 21 February 2002, for one, has generated a lot of anxieties among union leaders, employers, HR managers and the industry that specializes on recruitment and supply of contractual employees, the service contractors.

Some enterprising lawyers and seminar centers have made a lot of money conducting symposia and seminars on the new rules. This is an area that the labor departments' Bureau of Working Standards may wish to explore in terms of information dissemination.

Fear of the unknown

The workers fear that their struggle against contractualization might have suffered a serious blow. The employers also fear that their prerogatives to outsource as a competitive coping tool might have been eroded. The HR managers fear that the new rules may further complicate their problems. And even arbiters, conciliators and DOLE functionaries fear that the new rule may generate undue disturbance of the precarious industrial peace. There is a measure of truth to all these but we shouldn't worry.

Not trying to be a prophet of boom, but only looking at the brighter side of things, this writer believes that there is nothing to fear. The order has clarified many of our common doubts. Instead of panic, which is the refuge of fools, let us analyze the new rules objectively and draw our respective plans on how to comply with them.

Basic principles

Contrary to the fear of the employers, on the one hand, the order declares up front that contracting and sub-contracting are allowed by law. Thus, there is no reason to say that our freedom to contract has been negated. Contrary to the workers' fear, on the other hand, contractualization won't be allowed without regulation to define its scope and manner.

The guiding policy is to regulate contracting and sub-contracting for the purposes of promoting employment and respecting workers' rights. These rights include just and humane conditions of work, security of tenure, self-organization and collective bargaining. The order however stresses what has been the consistent rule since 1974 that labor-only contracting is prohibited absolutely.

'Labor-only' is taboo

Like in previous DOLE orders, there is an absolute prohibition of contractualization where the service contractor is a mere merchant of labor who earns money out of the sweat of his fellow human being. He has no value-added. In effect, he is like a pimp whose only work is to make the prostitute and the customer meet.

Service contract is not prostitution but a dignified profession, where agencies train and empower the unskilled, give him skills and connections and locate his match in an open market. Thus, the service contractor is a valuable contributor to both the contractual worker and the principal employer. He is also a pillar of the economy.

Badges of 'labor-only'

Section 5 of the order identifies the badges or indicia of labor-only contracting, which we should all avoid. These are lack of substantial capital, allowing contractual employees to do regular work and the contractors' lack of control over the contractual workers.

Substantial capital is defined to include capital stocks and subscribed capitalization, tools, equipment, machinery and work premises actually and directly used by the contractor. Control is the contractors' power to determine not only the result to be achieved by the contractual workers but also the manner and the means of achieving such a result.

What are disallowed?

The order prohibits service contracts that are not "bona fide" and results in the termination of regular employees, reduction of work hours or splitting of bargaining units. The *cabo* system is also condemned, where a labor group supplies the workers. It also disallows assigning regular work to contractual workers, requiring workers to sign advanced quitclaims and waivers of labor standard benefits or antedated resignation letters. It also prohibits fixed term work tenures.

In-house agencies are also prohibited. They are the contractors owned by the principal himself. Service contracts are disallowed as a means of contracting out jobs of strikers and those designed to interfere, restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of their right to self-organization. In other words, contracting cannot be used to bust the unions.

Contractual employees' rights

The order specifies that contractual workers have rights to the following: safe and healthful working conditions, labor standards such as service incentive leave, rest days, overtime pay, holiday pay, 13th month pay and separation pay.

They also have social security and welfare benefits, they have the right to join unions and bargain collectively, and the right to peaceful concerted action. Above all, they have the right to security of tenure. But in legitimate job contracting, it is the contractor who will bear all the costs of these. Of course, they are predisposed to shift the cost to the principal.

Regulating contractors

All contractors are required to register, failure to do this gives rise to the presumption that they are engaged in labor-only contracting. They have to submit a lot of documents and pay registration fees. They have to submit regular reports and may be delisted for non-compliance.

Violations will be discovered. The DOLE inspectors will invoke the secretary of labor's visitorial power under Article 128 of the code. This is however a rich source of corruption. Secretary Sto. Tomas should install a system of detection and speedy prosecution of erring inspectors. We should remember, as the secretary aptly said, we must pay a tuition fee for social cohesion. These rules are among the price we have to pay in the name of social justice as an anchor for peace.

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)

Soft coup

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

A POPULAR leader surrounded by a Chinoy coterie was elbowed out by the Makati-based business and technocratic elite. Edsa II?

The candidate who receives the most number of popular votes loses out in the electoral counting. US presidential elections, 2000?

A group of outsider-nominees backed by the government takes over a leading private company and its management. PCGG, 1986?

A team of Ateneans, helped by a partial referee, trounces a La Salle-University Belt combine. La Salle-Ateneo UAAP rematch?

The answer to all four questions is, would you believe, the recently concluded Philippine Stock Exchange elections.

Winners and losers

• THE BLOODLETTING at GMA Channel 7 continues, with Dan de Padua, vice president for operations, being the latest recipient of a "show-cause" letter from chair/CEO/president Felipe Gozon.

• THE ASIAN Hospital in Alabang, the country's newest, world-class hospital, will start admitting out-patients today.

• BANCO Filipino vice chair Albert "Bobby" Aguirre has rounded up his half-brother Lawrence and half-sister Catherine in a move to foreclose on all the US assets of Bobby's real sister, Ana Maria (Nanette).

The S-factor

• THE ALLEGED "sex" dossier of Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo was leaked out to the press by the camp of Rep. Prospero Pichay.

• THE PUBLIC relations-author of the full-page "morality" ads against Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez himself used to date female students as young as his daughter when he was still teaching in a Catholic university.

Heard through the grapevine

THE TAMBUNTINGS of the pawnshop fame are the latest family to be hit by inheritance squabble among the siblings.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Stocks down

SHARES yesterday closed lower as a lack of fresh cues and an eye to upcoming holidays kept many investors on the sidelines, traders said.

The disinterest was reflected in the turnover which dipped to P432.48 million from P446.63 million on Wednesday. The main index closed down 16.47 points, or 1.19 percent, at 1,366.13 points.

Traders said without new leads and with Holy Week holidays approaching at the end of the month, many investors are just waiting out the current consolidation phase. ***Reuters***

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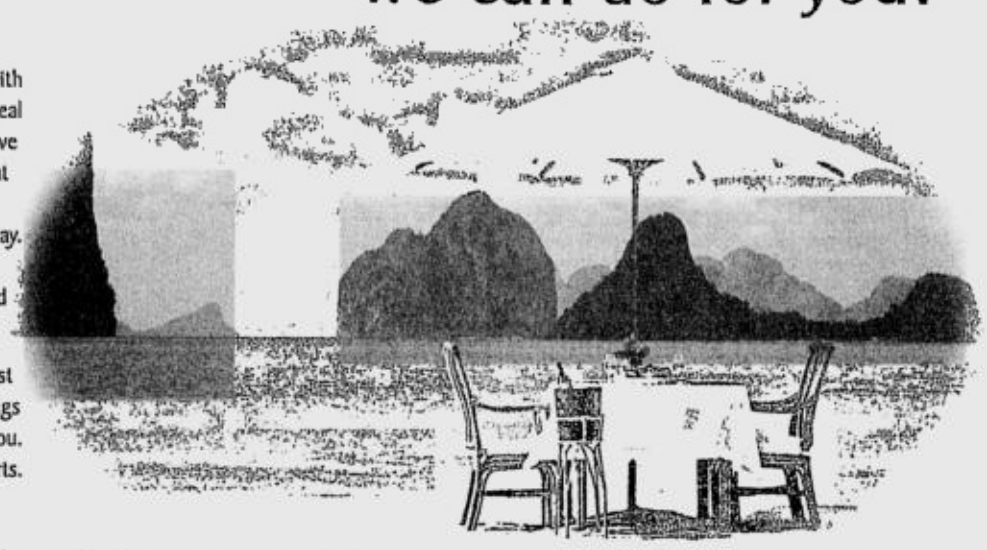

Surely there is. We'll start with a special offer - our Sweet Deal Promo. Enjoy our all-inclusive packages at special rates that start from P12,000 net per person for a 3 day/2 night stay. We're also adding extra privileges - Kids for Free and Dive El Nido for Free.

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NO SECURITIES CODE VIOLATION

SEC clears Leung appointment

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission yesterday gave its vote of confidence to beleaguered Philippine Stock Exchange president Ernest Leung, saying his appointment did not violate the Securities Regulation Code.

This developed as former PSE president Ramon Garcia—who was disqualified from the election of non-broker representatives to the PSE board—yesterday said Leung and newly installed PSE chair Vivian Yuchengco should step down from office to "dispel animosity" within the exchange.

The PSE election squabble continued to heat up as stock brokers at the PSE head office in Ortigas staged a lightning rally at the Tektite trading floor on Wednesday to seek Leung's resignation and to protest Yuchengco's election as PSE chair last Saturday. Yuchengco was elected chair with eight votes, mostly from non-broker members of the board, over rival Robert Coyiuto's seven votes.

In a letter to PSE directors dated March 14, SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said that when the commission gave its blessing to Leung's appointment late last year, it had granted him an exemption from the provision in the SRC that barred from the said post persons who had been associated with any broker or dealer or listed companies in the last two years prior the appointment.

Leung's qualification as PSE president is being questioned by Coyiuto's group because he was chair of DBP Daiwa Securities SMBC Philippines until June 30, 2001.

Bautista, who spoke on behalf of the SEC en banc, said the two-year provision in the SRC sought to ensure that the PSE management would act independently and would not be subjected to undue influence by member-firms or listed companies. She said the intention was to prevent the management from acting contrary to the interest of the investing public.

The SEC chief noted that Leung became chair of DBP Daiwa only by reason of his position as chair of state-controlled Development Bank of the Philippines and not as an owner or stockholder of DBP.

"In this instance, he was a nominee of the DBP group which was the beneficial owner of a substantial number of shares of the broker-firm," Bautista said.

The SEC chief also noted that the SRC gave the SEC the power to give "exemptive relief" and had done so in the case of Leung after the SEC took into account the "special circumstances of his election as chair of DBP Daiwa Securities."

Bautista said she could not say, however, whether the same exemption would apply to nominees of private corporations in their subsidiary brokerage firms where these nominees sat as directors or officers.

The SEC chief was referring to the case of Leung's successor, Garcia, who was disqualified because he was about two months short of the two-year prohibition.

Bautista said she hoped that the SEC's clarification should put to rest the brewing leadership squabble in the PSE.

But Coyiuto and his supporters vowed to continue their protests against Leung and Yuchengco.

"Their resignations will effectively dismiss a lot of questions regarding the integrity of the stock exchange. As directors, they should take the lead in preserving the reputation of the PSE," Garcia said.

Leung, for his part, had said he was giving due consideration to calls for him to step down.

Coyiuto, for his part, yesterday said Leung's election was in violation of the PSE bylaws that stated that members of the board must be elected during the annual meeting and that election rules prescribed a separate balloting for non-broker candidates.

"No such ballot was issued. During the meeting, only ballots for the broker-candidates were issued and voted upon as shown by the official tabulation result," Coyiuto said.

Another PSE director from the Coyiuto camp, former PSE chair Harry Liu, said there was no motion on the floor made during the PSE stockholders meeting on Saturday to dispense with the balloting and to cast the votes in favor of Leung's appointment as a non-broker director.

Liu said the announcement made by the corporate secretary—that since there were only eight non-broker candidates, they were therefore deemed elected—was not enough to substitute for free balloting.

Ang buys 10% stake in Philweb

BUSINESSMAN Ramon Ang, the newly installed president of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., is acquiring a 10-percent stake in Philweb.com Inc., the technology holding firm of former trade minister Roberto Ongpin.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Philweb corporate information officer Roberto Valdes said the company had approved Ang's subscription to a primary issue of Philweb at a price of 2 centavos per share, which is within the prevailing market price.

News of the private placement to be made by Ang, who already sits as a Philweb board member, boosted the company's share price yesterday closing at 2.2 centavos or 0.2-centavo higher than Wednesday's close.

Ang's total investment in the company, said Valdes, was estimated at P90 million.

Ang, known as the right-hand man of SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, also has personal investments in other listed companies such as cement maker Zeus Holdings Inc., paper manufacturer Picop Holdings Inc., Prime Orion Guoco Holdings Phils. Inc. and property developer CyberBay Corp.

For its part, Philweb was founded by Ongpin, who engineered the rise of Belle Corp. into a stock market favorite a few years ago with its entry into jai alai. After being ousted from Belle, Ongpin took over a dormant company South Seas Natural Resources Inc. in 2000 and transformed it into a technology holding firm.

ICTSI vows to continue operations in Brazil

PORT operator International Container Terminal Services Inc. yesterday said it was determined to continue its operations in the newly privatized port of Suape in Brazil despite looming labor-related woes.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, ICTSI chair Enrique Razon said negotiations were underway to strike a deal with the five labor unions at the Suape Container Terminal in Pernambuco, Brazil, which were protesting plans to lower the rates on container moves.

The ICTSI chief explained that the labor pay in Brazil was different from other port labor wages across the globe and that Brazilian labor was paid on a per-container move basis at a current rate of $60 per container. He said laborers in other ports were being paid wages and salaries regardless of how many containers were moved.

ICTSI's wholly owned subsidiary, Tecon Suape SA (TSSA) which was created to operate and develop the container terminal at the port, was planning to invest around $60 million in equipment and facilities during the 30-year port concession period.

"This is a typical Brazilian labor situation and we do not foresee any negative impact on either TSSA or ICTSI," Razon said.

When TSSA took over port operations in the Suape terminal late last year, Razon explained that a reduction of the rate on container moves was among the measures identified to improve productivity but had met stiff opposition from the labor unions.

Despite the labor's opposition to the proposed lowering of rates, Razon assured that TSSA had no intentions of hiring port labor outside of the unions.

Razon said he expected to come up with a resolution that would be "to the satisfaction of all parties concerned."

He said the Brazilian government was supportive of the efforts of TSSA to resolve the issue because it has always respected Brazilian labor laws and assured that the ICTSI unit would continue to do so.

Apart from the unique charging of containers by labor, he said TSSA was also working on farming out among the five labor unions various tasks in the terminal.

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318iA M Sport	2,300,000	805,000	**36,000**
325iA Exec	2,735,000	957,250	**42,500**

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DISCLOSURES

NEGROS Navigation Co. Inc. denied having any information that could explain the increase in its share price that rose from P0.155 to P0.23 per share.

* * *

STENIEL Manufacturing Corp. denied having any information that could explain the increase in its share price from P0.26 to P0.39 per share. Also, the company's annual stockholders' meeting will be held on April 30, 2 p.m. at the boardroom of Steniel Cavite Packaging Corp., General Trias, Cavite.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 26, 2:30 p.m. at the Rigodon Ballroom of Peninsula Manila Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 27 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 17, 9:30 a.m. at the Francisco Santiago Hall, mezzanine floor of Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of March 1 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ROBINSONS Land Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 30, 4 p.m. at the Manansala Hall of Manila Galleria Suites, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of April 30 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

UNIVERSAL Robina Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 28, 4 p.m. at the Amorsolo Ballroom of Manila Galleria Suites, Pasig City. Stockholders of record as of April 26 are entitled to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Thursday, March 14, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	11,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	66	66.5	65	65.5	435,900
China Banking Corp.	590	590	590	590	1,900
Chinatrust Comm. Bank	17	17	17	17	2,000
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	34	34	33	33	315,200
First E-Bank Corp.	2.5	2.5	2.34	2.34	41,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	44	43.5	44	82,200
Philippine National Bank	60.5	60.5	60.5	60.5	1,900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.25	20.25	20.25	20.25	79,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1020	1025	1020	1020	1,030
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Diversified Fin. Network	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.69	0.69	2,130,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	790	790	790	79,230
Ipeople Inc.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0625	0.065	0.06	0.06	7,100,000
Piltel	0.45	0.47	0.45	0.46	3,770,000
Philstar.Com Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	10,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	505	505	500	505	152,800
Ivantage Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	40,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.022	213,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30	30.5	30	30.5	19,400
Manila Electric Co. B	45.5	45.5	44	44	792,000
Petron Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.74	1.74	5,034,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.91	0.91	0.91	0.91	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	300,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.4	2.48	2.3	2.48	11,954,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	20,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	200,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.52	1.52	50,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.63	0.64	0.63	0.63	5,450,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.25	12.25	12	12	324,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	23.25	23.25	23	23	34,000
RFM Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.48	1.5	2,162,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48	47.5	47.5	148,000
San Miguel Corp. B	62	62	61.5	61.5	204,200
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.51	100,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.4	1,668,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.98	1.98	1.96	1.96	40,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.73	0.73	260,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	2,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.32	150,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.45	3.2	3.25	801,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.77	0.78	0.76	0.76	7,430,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	150,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	50,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	700,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	2,900,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	251,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	30.5	30.5	30	30	255,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.145	0.15	0.14	0.14	2,440,000
Ionics Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	15,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	55,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	3,860,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	550,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.29	0.3	2,260,000
Music Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	300,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.91	0.92	1,240,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	320,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	250,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	190,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	360,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	100,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	150,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Pryce Corp.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	300,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	14	14	2,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.51	0.51	0.49	0.49	1,600,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.57	230,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	80,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34	34	32.5	32.5	234,200
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	780	780	775	775	300
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	780	780	780	780	2,000
RFM Corp. - Pref.	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	2,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	134,000,000
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	460	460	460	460	100
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	7,090,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	6,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	50,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	2,150,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	500,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	3,900,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	50,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.06	2.06	4,175,000
SM Development Corp.	1	1	1	1	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.2	4,216,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	1,400,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	15,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	200,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.043	0.04	0.042	61,300,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	30,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	740,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	40,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	200,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	240,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	14,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	3,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	200,000
Pacifica	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	9,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	190,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	974,130	46,753,290.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	419,358,830	298,578,080.00
PRO	23,577,000	83,171,660.00
Mining	118,510,000	3,434,700.00
OIL	28,390,000	330,100.00
GRAND TOTALS:	590,819,960	432,292,830.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	560.41	DOWN 5.58
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,873.70	DOWN 21.19
PRO	579.71	DOWN 9.40
Mining	1,317.05	UP 8.25
OIL	1.76	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	743.26	DOWN 6.39
Composite	1,366.13	DOWN 16.47

NO. OF ADVANCES: 16; NO. OF DECLINES: 48; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 52; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 116; NO. OF TRADES: 2,084

CURRENCIES

March, 14, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.140901	1.000000	50.9130
Japan	Yen	0.008805	0.007718	0.3929
United Kingdom	Pound	1.615859	1.416300	72.1081
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146275	0.128210	6.5276
Switzerland	Franc	0.681379	0.597229	30.4067
Canada	Dollar	0.715254	0.626920	31.9184
Singapore	Dollar	0.625495	0.548246	27.9128
Australia	Dollar	0.593910	0.520562	26.5034
Bahrain	Dinar	3.026424	2.652661	135.0549
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.304241	0.266667	13.5768
Brunei	Dollar	0.625151	0.547945	27.8975
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000100	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026355	0.023100	1.1761
UAE	Dirham	0.310635	0.272272	13.8622
Korea	Won	0.000871	0.000763	0.0388
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.876500	44.6252
Brazil	Real	0.487564	0.427350	21.7577
Denmark	Kroner	0.134501	0.117890	6.0021
India	Rupee	0.023456	0.020559	1.0467
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.300237	0.263158	13.3982
Mexico	New Peso	0.125346	0.109866	5.5936
New Zealand	Dollar	0.490246	0.429701	21.8774
Norway	Kroner	0.128836	0.112925	5.7494
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019110	0.01675	0.8528
South Africa	Rand	0.098831	0.086625	4.4103
Sweden	Kroner	0.109595	0.09606	4.8907
Syria	Pound	0.026048	0.022831	1.1624
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032710	0.02867	1.4597
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001268	0.001111	0.0566

Importers reject DTI moves to restrict used vehicle trade

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IMPORTERS of used vehicles in Subic yesterday took a defiant stance against the Department of Trade and Industry as they vowed to resist any moves by the agency to restrict their booming trade.

Motor Vehicles Importers Association of Subic Bay Freeport Inc. (MVIA) president Eddie Barretto said the DTI's plan to stop the importation of used cars, including sports utility vehicles, and regulate the shipment of second-hand commercial vehicles was an attack on "free enterprise" and that it ran counter to the Trade Liberalization Law and Free Trade Act.

Contrary to the DTI's declaration that the used car imports in Subic are illegal, Barretto said his group has fully complied with all the rules and regulations pertaining to pre-owned vehicle importation, including payment of duties and taxes and compliance with anti-pollution and roadworthiness testing.

This is why, Barretto said, it was unnecessary for the government to create a task force led by the DTI to review the booming second-hand, imported vehicle market in Subic. "We are neither criminals nor members of any terrorist group."

Barretto appealed to the President not to impose harsh measures against importers of used vehicles which, he said, served as an alternative for Filipinos who could not afford to buy brandnew vehicles. It also is a source of livelihood for the hundreds of Filipinos adept in converting right hand vehicles, he added.

The DTI is currently drawing up a legal action plan against the Subic importers in a bid to check the influx of used vehicle imports in the country which the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (Amcham) and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines (JCCI) claimed has driven American and Japanese assemblers in the country out of business.

Trade and Industry Undersecretary and task force head Adrian Cristobal Jr. told automotive assemblers and consumer groups in a meeting that the importation of used cars "is a blatant violation of government import regulations" and that the government was committed to stop this illegal trade.

The other task force members are the Department of Finance, Bureau of Customs, Land Transportation Office, and Department of Transportation and Communication.

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Neda sees 4.3% GDP growth in first quarter

By Clarissa S. Batino

ECONOMIC Planning Secretary Dante Canlas yesterday said he was expecting gross domestic product to grow by as much as 4.3 percent, year-on-year, in the first quarter of the year in view of the improvement in the United States economy and the strong performance of the farm sector.

"Based on leading indicators, the gross domestic product will grow between 3.8 percent and 4.3 percent in the first quarter," Canlas said during the 39th annual meeting of the Philippine Economic Society yesterday.

Canlas also told reporters on the sidelines of the business forum that the government might cut its average inflation rate forecast this year to 4.5 to 5.5 percent from the previous target of 5 to 6 percent.

"The recession (in the United States) seems to have ended in the fourth quarter and it seems to be holding up in the first quarter," he told reporters.

The decline in interest rates will also help the economy, he added.

"The decline in interest rates will be a stimulus for construction. This was sluggish in 2001," he said.

In the fourth quarter of 2001, GDP expanded by an annual 3.8 percent as the robust growth in the agriculture and services sectors offset the slump in the industry sector.

GDP grew by 3.4 percent for the whole of 2001.

A strong first-quarter growth, he said, will ensure that the full-year growth will be within the 4- to 4.5-percent target.

Aside from the projected 4-percent growth in agriculture in the first quarter, economic managers also pointed to the contribution of other sectors like tourism, industry and services as among the drivers of growth during the quarter.

"We do not expect the decline in the industry this year to be as severe as last year's contraction," he added. *With a report from Reuters*

GOINGS-ON

Thrift banks' 2002 confab

IN observance of Thrift Banks Week, the Chamber of Thrift Banks will hold its 2002 annual convention with the theme "Working for a Revitalized Economy" today at Dusit Hotel, Makati City. The convention will bring together over a hundred senior officials of the country's thrift banks for thorough discussions on crucial issues affecting the industry vis-a-vis its role in the Philippine economy.

The conference will focus on how to further enhance the capabilities and contributions of thrift banks in rebuilding the Philippine economy.

Notable personalities in banking and finance are expected to grace the event including Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho who will be the keynote speaker.

Construction exposition

THE 7TH Philippine World Building and Construction Exposition (Worldbex 2002) recently opened at the World Trade Center in Pasay City. The exhibition will run until March 17, 2002.

Carrying the theme "Linking the World in One Global Construction Network," the event was graced by government luminaries led by Sen. Francisco Pangilinan, Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri, Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council Chair Michael T. Defensor and Trade Undersecretary Thomas Aquino.

Bangko Sentral

From page B1

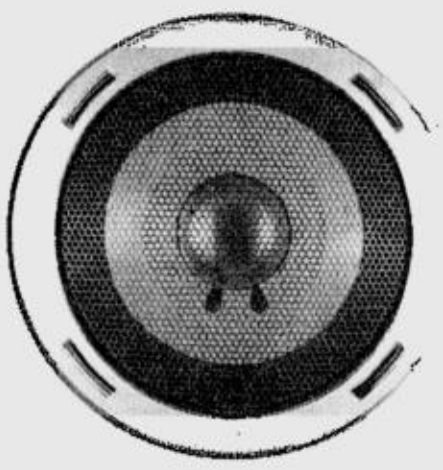
on bank deposits in its vaults to encourage these lenders to extend credit aggressively.

While P5 billion worth of deposits in its overnight facility would still earn 7 percent for a bank and the next P5 billion would yield 4 percent, any placements in the BSP in excess of P10 billion would earn only one percent in interest.

Buenaventura explained that the BSP wanted to discourage banks from parking their excess cash in its vaults and to use the funds for lending, specially to the private sector.

He said bank placements, whether in the overnight, term, or special deposit accounts, would be viewed collectively by the BSP to prevent banks from splitting their funds into these facilities to take advantage of higher interest rates.

"While inflation risks have lessened, they are still present. The BSP would be watchful of trends affecting inflation, particularly oil and power rates and the impact of the El Niño (weather phenomenon) expected late this year to farm output," the BSP governor noted.

EXCLUSIVE FOR STANDARD CHARTERED CARD HOLDERS UP TO MARCH 17, 2002

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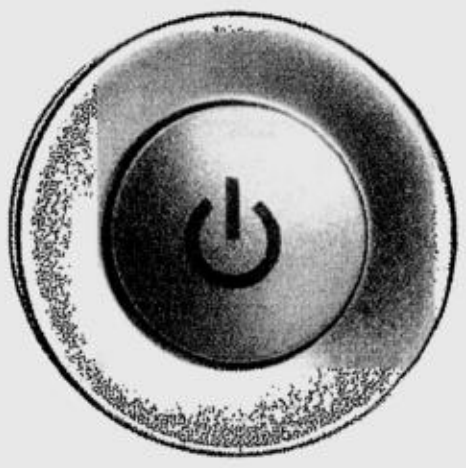
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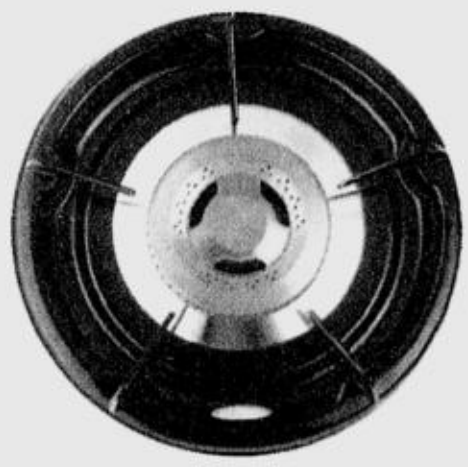
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Poverty to resist improving world economy

WASHINGTON—The world's poorest countries will struggle to slash poverty even as economic growth edges higher this year, the World Bank warned in a key annual report released Wednesday.

The report, Global Development Finance, adds fuel to a heated debate in the run-up to a March 18 to 22 UN summit in Monterrey, Mexico, over how rich countries should pay for development.

Developing countries' gross domestic product is forecast to expand by 3.2 percent this year, slightly up from 2.8 percent last year, before bouncing along at 5 percent in 2003, the report said.

That would be better than the rich nations, which are expected to grow 0.8 percent in 2002, unchanged from last year, and then 3.2 percent in 2003, it said.

"But growth rates in many poor countries still will be too low for rapid poverty reduction," the World Bank said.

The report ramped up World Bank pressure—resisted by some rich nations such as the United States—for donors to lift official aid by $40 billion to $60 billion a year.

The increase is required to meet UN-agreed development goals, which include halving the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015 from 1990 levels, the World Bank said.

Official aid provided by donors actually fell by 1.6 percent in real terms to $53.1 billion in 2000, it said.

"We are urging rich countries to demonstrate their commitment to the goals by opening their markets to developing-country products and increasing assistance to low-income countries that use aid effectively," the World Bank said.

World leaders must make a lasting commitment by "substantially increasing aid" in Monterrey next week, said World Bank chief economist Nicholas Stern, commenting on the findings.

"Many poor countries have improved their policies, institutions and performance in the past decade: Because aid is increasingly channeled to these countries, aid is more effective today than ever before," he added.

"But even successful poor countries are being hurt by lower global growth, adverse trends in commodity prices and declining aid."

Stern pressed rich countries to open up further to goods from poorer nations, estimating that agricultural subsidies in the developed world totaled well over $300 billion a year.

"It is hypocritical for the developed countries to speak about change without facing themselves the cost of that change," he told a news conference.

The report found many developing countries had been hit by low prices for commodities ranging from coffee to precious metals.

Foreign direct investment to developing countries was little changed from the previous year at $168 billion in 2001.

But private capital flows from jittery markets fell $30 billion to $234 billion—$100 billion below the 1997 peak after five straight annual declines.

The World Bank report said the economic shock of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks had postponed a rebound of the world economy by two quarters.

World growth was forecast to edge up from 1.2 percent last year to 1.3 percent in 2002 and 3.6 percent in 2003.

"Recovery in 2003 is likely to be strongest in East Asia, where countries have benefited from domestic stimulus, and where strong dynamics in the high tech sectors could once again work in their favor," it said.

"The Latin American countries are also expected to recover from the very slow growth of 2002, although growth will be less than rapid than in the Asian countries, as financial strains remain elevated and commodity prices are expected to rebound only modestly."

Low commodity prices would continue to restrain economic growth in some of the poorest countries, however, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

South Asian growth was set to be high, the World Bank forecast.

But lower oil prices would rein in growth in the Middle East, North Africa, Russia and some other former Soviet states, it said.

Central and eastern Europe, however, would be buoyed by faster growth in the European Union.

World Bank president James Wolfensohn is urging donor-nations to step aid in increments of $10 billion a year over five years in order to meet the UN development goals. *AFP*

HOW THE RICH COUNTRIES RANK IN AID TO POOR

WASHINGTON—Following is an OECD table ranking donor countries in 2000 by the level of official development assistance they provide as a percentage of gross national income.

The United Nations has set a target for donors to give ODA equal to at least 0.7 percent of their economic output.

A World Bank report released Wednesday, Global Development Finance, stepped up pressure on rich countries to increase aid.

1.	Denmark	1.06 percent
2.	Netherlands	0.84
3.	Sweden	0.80
4.	Norway	0.80
5.	Luxembourg	0.71
6.	Belgium	0.36
7.	Switzerland	0.34
8.	France	0.32
9.	Britain	0.32
10.	Finland	0.31
11.	Ireland	0.30
12.	Japan	0.28
13.	Germany	0.27
14.	Australia	0.27
15.	Portugal	0.26
16.	Canada	0.25
17.	New Zealand	0.25
18.	Austria	0.23
19.	Spain	0.22
20.	Greece	0.20
21.	Italy	0.13
22.	United States	0.10

RP to acquire more US surplus commodities

THE PHILIPPINE government will acquire another batch of surplus commodities from the United States worth about $20 million, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said Wednesday.

This will raise the country's share of the US Public Law (PL) 480 commodity loan program to $40 million this year, as another $20 million has already been approved.

The earlier shipments consisted of $10 million worth of wheat, $8 million worth of rice and $2 million worth of white corn.

The PL 480 program allows a government to acquire and sell US surplus commodities and use acquired proceeds to finance government farm projects.

Christine A. Gaylican

NFA to seek offers for 27,000 tons of sugar

THE NATIONAL Food Authority said yesterday that it planned to seek tenders soon for the supply of 27,000 tons of sugar.

"We are targeting bringing it in after the (local sugarcane) harvest," NFA Deputy Administrator Gregorio Tan told reporters on the sidelines of an Asian farmers' meeting in Manila.

Harvest of local cane in the current crop year (September-August) started in September and was expected to peak in April or May.

Tan said the NFA would likely buy refined sugar either from Australia, South Korea, Thailand or Brazil.

The volume that the NFA planned to import this year was part of the 56,000 tons that the country committed to the World Trade Organization to allow entry at low tariff, he said.

The remaining 29,000 tons would be imported by local firms, Tan said.

A CHILD plays an accordion for change in downtown Monterrey, Mexico. More than 50 world leaders will gather there to discuss ways to end poverty during the UN International Conference on Financing for Development. AP

WTO negotiators told to study style of other countries

THE PHILIPPINES should study the negotiating stance of other nations in the ongoing negotiations on trade in services under the World Trade Organization and come out with its own that reflects the best interests of the country.

This has been the advice of the Asian Institute of Management's Federico Macaranas to Philippine government negotiators who have not come out with negotiating positions to meet the June 30 deadline for the submission of its requests for market access to other nations.

Negotiations on trade in services under the WTO started in January. Guidelines and procedures will be out by March 28. In May, the Philippines must already come out with its offer on what professions or fields it will open to foreigners. By June, it is expected to have made its requests for access to markets in other countries.

Service is the Philippines' largest net export earner, with remittances of overseas Filipino workers estimated at between $6 billion and $10 billion a year.

The sending out of persons to work in other countries is where the Philippines is the world's No. 1.

Philexport News and Features

PLDT still seeking for buyers of Smart minority stake

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. is still seeking out other investors interested in acquiring a minority stake in its mobile phone unit, Smart Communications Inc., as it has yet to conclude a deal with the American International Group.

PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said Wednesday that the country's leading telecommunications firm was in "broad range of discussions" with several investors.

"But we can't talk about it because (the talks) are in a sensitive period," Pangilinan said in the sidelines of a cable network's launch.

PLDT was reported earlier to have broken off talks to sell 10 to 15 percent of its stake in Smart Communications Inc. to NTT DoCoMo of Japan.

The country's No. 1 telecommunications firm, however, was also said to be set to conclude a deal to sell this month 5 percent of its equity in Smart to AIG.

Company sources said NTT pulled out of negotiations with PLDT, as it decided to instead hedge against the impact of an economic slowdown in the United States.

The aborted PLDT-NTT deal would have been an expansion of the existing strategic partnership between the two companies.

NTT already owns a 15-percent interest in PLDT.

PLDT is reportedly considering proposals from other groups, as well as other options to raise cash and meet its debt obligations.

One such group is AIG, which is said to be ready to conclude a deal with PLDT before the Holy Week later this month.

The sale will net for PLDT a sum way below the $300 million it has been hoping to get from NTT, but Pangilinan is unperturbed, according to one company official.

Another party that has expressed interest in buying into Smart is the group of tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan.

The INQUIRER reported earlier that Tan was intent on acquiring more than the maximum 20 percent that Pangilinan earlier put on the auction block.

On Monday, PLDT said it had yet to decide how much of Smart it would spin off to raise cash to repay debts.

PLDT said it was premature to reveal potential investors in Smart.

"We reiterate that the company has not made a determination regarding the percentage of equity interest in Smart that will be sold, the structure and terms of the contemplated Smart equity sale transaction and the Valuation of the Smart Shares," PLDT said in a statement to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

PLDT had previously said it would not sell more than 20 percent of Smart and talks with potential investors were continuing.

Ronnel W. Domingo

DHL sets goal to double size of Philippine business in five years

By Raul C. Dancel

DHL Worldwide Express, one of the world's largest express mail service providers, is hoping to double the size of its business in the Philippines in the next five years.

"We are confident we will be able to do that," Byan Jamison, area director for Southeast Asia of DHL International (S) Pte Ltd., told the INQUIRER.

"I'm talking about doubling the size of the business we conduct in the Philippines," he said, "doubling the (number) of packages we move both in and out of the country."

DHL has already invested some $15 million in the Philippines since June last year to take a more direct hand in running its operations here.

It has formed a joint venture—DHL Worldwide Express (Philippines) Corp.—with the group of businessman Rod Feliciano, its local partner for 30 years, and has put up an infrastructure that, according to Jamison, is more advanced than anywhere else in DHL's Asian network.

"In discussions with a number of our customers, it was highlighted that the Philippines was one area we needed to infuse investments into so as to provide a consistent service. So we set out to establish a world-class company in the Philippines, to provide the full suite of DHL products and services," Jamison said.

The company is fully leveraging all available Web-based, digital and wireless technologies to run its Philippine office more efficiently.

Among the technologies it is currently using is its "next-generation courier scanner" system that allows couriers and customers to get real-time information about their packages anywhere in the world. It has also centrally linked its service centers so that it can monitor the movements of its vehicles from the time they leave the factory to the time they get to the airport.

DHL Philippines has already put up six service centers in Metro Manila, Southern Luzon and Central Visayas. It has a fleet of 130 vehicles and currently employs about 450 workers.

DHL Philippines manager Mike Fitzpatrick said the company was set on opening 10 more express centers this year.

Fitzpatrick said DHL's outlook, as far as the Philippines was concerned, remained positive despite a resurgence in terrorist activities in Mindanao, a still unstable domestic political climate and a global economic slowdown.

"We have our normal global security standards that we've implemented here in the Philippines. Certainly, we don't see the Philippines as a high-risk country," he said.

Jamison added: "First of all, $15 million is a significant investment. That wasn't made because of what the economic environment is today or tomorrow. We are a networked company, and we are making these investments for the medium- and long-term. We are not making them for the short-term."

"The Philippines and Asia, in general, are particularly linked to the US economy, directly and indirectly. We are noticing an increase in business activity. It's not dramatic, but it is definitely trending upward. So I think that bodes well for a gradual but steady increase in business activities toward the balance of the year," Jamison said.

DHL operates in 228 countries and territories across the world. The company began doing business in the Philippines in 1971.

DHL Worldwide Express (Philippines) Corp. manager Mike Fitzpatrick (second from left) and DHL International (S) Pte Ltd. area director Byan Jamison at DHL's new Philippine office.

Asia's plastics firms get ready to export their way out of slump

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

SINGAPORE—Confident in the economic opportunities of Asia's 3.7-billion-strong population, leaders in the region's plastic industry have urged the adoption of more technological innovations to adapt to global trends and competition.

Thongchai Ampiegulwatana, acting chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Federation of Plastic Industries (Afpi), pushed for a move in this direction, noting that since "Asean members are preparing for a turnaround, key data suggest that trade will recover, and that the region will be exporting its way out of the current slump."

He said these positive signs, coming on the heels of the after-effects of the 1997 Asian financial crisis, were indications that it was "important" for Afpi's 3,000 member companies to "continue to improve their position in the global marketplace."

Asia accounted for 31.1 percent, or some 50 million tons, of the 163 million tons of plastics produced worldwide in 2000, industry reports showed.

Japan contributed 30 percent of the total output.

The Afpi appeared decisive to maintain the niche. Its project—the AseanPlas 2002—which ran until March 15 at the Singapore Expo, unveiled the latest advances in machinery, products and processing solutions to Southeast Asian markets.

Manufacturers and suppliers, which include major industry players, still appear keen on the Asian market.

The fair, organized by Messe Dusseldorf Asia, gathered from 22 countries at least 345 exhibitors. This number was an increase of 77 exhibitors compared to 268 companies that joined the fifth fair in 1999.

The organizer also reported a 20-percent net space sold in the show's 15,000-square-meter area.

It said the sectors in packaging, electrical, electronics and telecommunications, automotive and transportation, leisure goods, building and construction, medical and healthcare, and furniture and furnishings showed significant enthusiasm for the show, pre-registering more than 60 percent of the 7,000 estimated visitors from Asia.

According to Ampiegulwatana, the participation of exhibitors and visitors suggests confidence in Asean markets despite global uncertainty.

"This is indeed a good sign that many of you have come to recognize the importance of Southeast Asian markets and your presence has reinforced that the future of plastics and rubber remains bright for many years to come," he told exhibitors during the trade fair opening on Monday.

He gave no estimates of industry growth, but players reckoned that demand for plastic in Asia would likely increase by an average 5 percent in per capita consumption starting this year.

But like Ampiegulwatana, Ronald Lim, Singapore Plastic Industry Association president, said the industry's agenda should remain in an area that is "vibrant and globally competitive" if it must brace for "some challenging times in the 21st century."

Bernd Knorr, secretary general of the European Committee of Machinery Manufacturers for Plastics and Rubber Industries, pointed to where the tests were coming from.

"It is certainly beyond question that the global markets, which are moving closer and closer together, will make even higher demands on quality, productivity and on the efficient utilization of energy and raw material resources." he said.

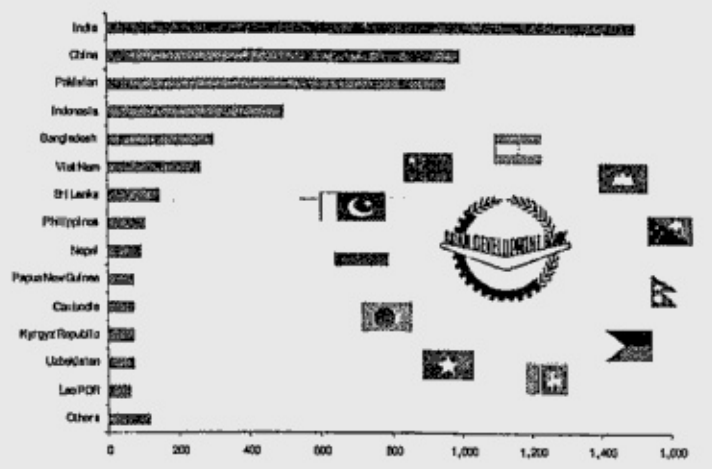
"Because of the increased competition, only companies which can adapt to these developments by applying up-to-dated production techniques will survive."

Watch-outs are on latest technology in automation and computerization, according to Philip Adams, president of Material Applications, and Sam Angrove of Enys International in a recent industry study.

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Asian Development Bank loans
(2001, in million US dollars)



Source: Asian Development Bank

TWENTY-TWO countries received loans amounting to $5.3 billion from the Asian Development Bank last year. India received the highest amount at $1.5 billion followed by China, $997 million. The Philippines got $105 million.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

Napocor privatization approved

A LEGISLATIVE panel has approved a plan to privatize the transmission assets of state-owned National Power Corp., officials said yesterday.

They said that under the plan passed by the panel on Wednesday night, the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Corp., the firm set up to sell the Napocor assets, could either sell outright or lease out Napocor's transmission assets.

The privatization plan for the transmission assets, estimated to fetch $2 billion, was expected to be approved soon by President Macapal-Arroyo.

PSALM president Edgardo del Fonso told reporters the panel has yet to pass the privatization plan for Napocor's generation assets, which was necessary before his company could mount an international road show to interested buyers.

"We do not know if we could brief investors without the (privatization plan) on the generation assets. I think it is best that we wait," he added.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. previously said the government planned to sell the transmission assets of Napocor in June or July and its generation assets late this year or in early 2003.

The privatization of the debt-ridden Napocor, the country's main power supplier, follows the passage of a law last year reforming the power industry.

Napocor chief executive officer Roland Quilala told a news conference on Thursday he expected his company's net loss to surge to P34 billion this year from P10.4 billion last year.

He attributed the huge losses for this year to the separation benefits of 8,800 Napocor employees that would be affected by the firm's privatization.

Quilala said Napocor would need P13 billion for the separation benefits of affected employees.

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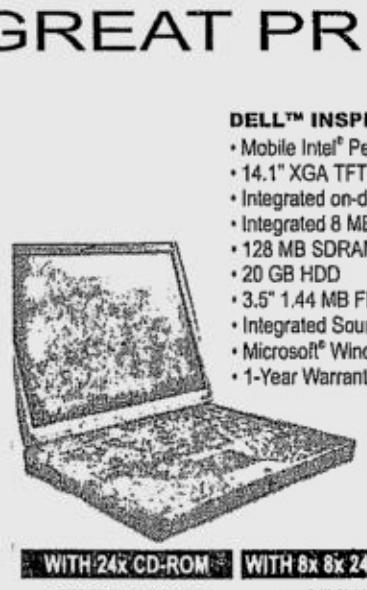

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
BRANCH 4 MANILA

RE: PETITION FOR ADOPTION OF MINOR CHILD PATRICK EMMARSON DE GUZMAN
SP. PROC. NO. 02-102834

SONNY JOHN G. PALAC AND ARLENE S. DE GUZMAN PALAC, Petitioners.
x----------x

ORDER

This a verified petition filed by petitioners Sonny John G. Palac and Arlene S. De Guzman Palac, praying that after due notice, publication and hearing, the minor Patrick Emmarson De Guzman be declared as their legally adopted child.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, let this petition be set for hearing on May 24, 2002 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning before this Court located at Rm 364, Third Flr., City Hall, Manila, after this Order shall have been published at the expense of the petitioners in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines for three (3) consecutive weeks after raffle.

All interested persons in this petition may appear at the aforesaid date of hearing and show cause, if any, why this petition should not be granted.

The Social Worker of this Court, Ma. Eleonor M. Magturo, is hereby ordered to conduct a home visitation and prepare a social case study reports on the person of the petitioners and herein minor sought to be adopted and to submit the same to this Court on or before the scheduled hearing of this petition.

Let a copy of this Order and the copy of the petition be served upon the Office of the Solicitor General, at 134 Amorsolo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City and the social worker of this Court, and the same be posted at the Bulletin Board in the premises of this Court, at three conspicuous places, at the expense of the petitioners.

SO ORDERED.
Manila, February 19, 2002.

(Sgd.) SOCORRO B. INTING
Presiding Judge

(PDI--March 8, 15 & 22, 2002)

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(1) ATTORNEY V (Item No. ATY5-1-98) SG 25 Bachelor of Laws; 3 years of relevant experience; 16 hours of relevant training; RA 1080 (Litigation Div.)

(1) MANAGEMENT & AUDIT ANALYST IV (Item No. 196*) SG 22 Bachelors degree relevant to the job; 3 years of relevant experience; 16 hours of relevant training; CS Prof. Second Level Eligibility (FMAO)

(1) MEDICAL OFFICER IV (Item No. MDOF 4) SG 20 Doctor of Medicine; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; Eligibility RA 1080 (FMAO) Effective May 11, 2002

(1) AGRARIAN REFORM PROGRAM OFFICER I (Item No. ARPO 1-11-98) SG 11 Bachelors degree relevant to the job; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Prof. Eligibility for Second Level Position (BARIE)

(1) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER I (Item No. ADO1-1-98) SG 11 Bachelors degree; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Prof. Second Level Eligibility (GSD)

(4) ACCOUNTANT I (Item No. A1-13, 16, 20,-21-98) SG 11 Bachelors degree in Commerce/Business Administration major in Accounting; Experience None required; Training None required; Eligibility RA 1080

(1) AUDIO VISUAL AIDS TECHNICIAN III (Item No. 58-2*) SG 10 High School Graduate of Completion of relevant vocational / trade course; Experience 2 years of relevant experience; Training 8 hours of relevant training; Eligibility Equipment Technician (MC 11, s 96 Cat II) (PAS)

(1) BUYER III (Item No. BY3-1-98) SG 9 Completion of two years studies in college; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; CS Sub-Prof. First Level Eligibility (GSD)

(1) AUDIO VISUAL AIDS TECHNICIAN II (Item No. 61*) SG 8 High School Graduate or Completion of relevant vocational/trade course; 1 year of relevant experience; 4 hours of relevant training; Eligibility Equipment Technician (MC 11, s 96-Cat. II) (PAS)

(1) MATHEMATICIAN AIDE II (Item No. MTH A2-1-98) SG 8 Completion of two years studies in college; 1 year relevant of experience; 4 hours of relevant training; CS Sub-Prof. First Level Eligibility (BLD)

(1) PHOTOGRAPHER II (Item No. 2-2-98) SG 7 High School Graduate or completion of relevant vocational/trade course; Experience None required; Training None required; Eligibility (MC 11 s 96 Cat. II) (BARIE)

(1) AUDIO VISUAL AIDS TECHNICIAN I (Item No. 65*) SG 6 High School Graduate or completion of relevant vocational/trade course; Experience None required; Training None required; Eligibility None required (MC 11, s96- Cat III) (PAS)

(2) CLERK III (Item No. 90*, 17-1*) SG 6 Completion of two years studies in college; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Sub-Prof. First Level Eligibility (PPO, OSEC)

(4) CLERK II (Item No. CK2-10, 11, 20, 25) SG 4 Completion of two years studies in college; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Sub-Prof. First Level Eligibility (Personnel Div./GSD)

(1) ACCOUNTING CLERK I (Item No. AC1-3-98) SG 4 Completion of two years studies in college; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Sub-Prof. Eligibility Appropriate Eligibility for First Level Position (Accounting Div.)

(2) HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AIDE (Item No. HRMA1, 10-98) SG 4 Completion of two years studies in college; Experience None required; Training None required; CS Sub-Prof. Appropriate Eligibility for First Level Position (Personnel Division)

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of BENJAMIN C. GUTIERREZ has been extrajudicially settled among the heirs as per Doc. No. 21; Page No. 6; Book No. III; Series of 2002 of Notary Public Barbara Ateli H. Briones.
PDI-Mar. 8,15,22, 2002

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Health
JOSE R. REYES MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER
Manila

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY OF FOODSTUFFS

The Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center invites sealed bid for the delivery of foodstuffs for the period MAY-AUGUST 2002.

Bid documents shall be released from March 15-20, 2002 at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRMMC, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P100.00.

Pre-bid conference will be held on March 21, 2002 at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRRMMC, 10:00 A.M.

Sealed bids shall be submitted at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRRMMC, not later than 10:00 a.m., March 26, 2002, after which time the same shall be publicly opened.

JRRMMC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, WAIVE ANY INFORMALITY OR DEFECT AND ACCEPT ANY BID WHICH IS MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) MA. ALICIA M. LIM, M.D.
Medical Center Chief II

(PDI--March 15 & 16, 2002)

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON GOOD GOVERNMENT
REGIONAL OFFICE NO. 8
TACLOBAN CITY

INVITATION TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) invites interested parties to participate in the sealed bidding for the lease of the ground floor of the People's Center and Library as venue for "Summer and Fiesta Bazaar and Trade Fair" from **May 15, 2002** to **July 15, 2002**, located at Real St., Tacloban City.

The bidding guidelines will be available from PCGG Office, Asset Management Department, 3rd floor, IRC building, 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City and at the PCGG Regional Office, Nipa Hut, Jones St., Tacloban City, starting **March 18, 2002**. For inquiries, please contact Darwin Altea Tel. No. 7260034 and Renor Dauag Tel. No. (053) 3213413.

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated after their submission at 10:00AM on **April 2, 2002** in the presence of the bidders at the PCGG Office, Asset Management Dept., 3rd Flr., IRC bldg., 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **RENOR O. DAUAG**
Officer-In-Charge
PCGG, Region 8

(PDI--Mar 15, 16, 17, 2002)

Department of Agriculture
PHILIPPINE CARABAO CENTER
at CENTRAL LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

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Supply of Labor & Materials/Equipment for repair of cold room

Pre-qualification requirements can be secured from Mr. Ronaldo A. Sadural Property section, Philippine Carabao Center National Gene Pool and Headquarters CLSU Compound, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija and Eustaquio C. Pagaduan, Philippine Carabao Center at CLSU Office located at Central Luzon State University, Science City of Muñoz, starting **April 1, 2002**. Last day of submission of pre-qualification documents will be on **April 5, 2002.**

Only those who submitted pre-qualification documents are allowed to attend the pre-bidding conference on **April 12, 2002**, 10:00 a.m. at the Philippine Carabao Center National Gene Pool and Headquarters Office. those who failed to attend the pre-bidding conference are disqualified to participate in the bidding.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PCC Headquarters not later than **April 19, 2002**, 10:00 a.m. at the same address. Only pre-qualified bidders will be allowed to attend the bidding proper.

The Philippine Carabao Center reserves the right to reject any of all bids, waive any formality in such bids, and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **FELOMINO V. MAMUAD**
Center Director

(PDI - March 15, 18 & 27, 2002)

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS
Miagao, Iloilo
Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas hereby invites all interested parties to participate in the public bidding of the following:

1. Item 1 – High Speed Internet Connection for the following UPV Campuses
   - 256Kbps – UPV Miagao Campus
   - 64Kbps – UPV Iloilo City Campus
   - 256Kbps – UPV Cebu College
   - 64Kbps – UPV Tacloban College

   The bandwidth should be provisioned and guaranteed from the above point of interconnection to an upstream US-based Internet Service Provider.
2. Item 2 - Supply of the following items:
   - Fluke DSP-4300 Digital Cable Analyzer with Multimode Fiber Test Adapter
   - Cisco 2621 Router with 2-port Serial WAN Interface Card, 2600 IOS IP Software and 10ft. V.35 DTE Male to Smart Serial Cable

All interested parties can participate in either or both of the items 1 or/and 2 and are hereby required to submit the following documents for evaluation not later than March 22,2002 at the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration (OVCA), University of the Philippines in the Visayas (UPV), Miagao, Iloilo:

1. Network Infrastructure including direct connections to the US
2. Data on Local Peering with Local ISPs
3. (Lists of other prequalification documents)

The following schedule of Bidding activities is to be held at the Tearoom, UPV Kitchenette, UPV Iloilo City campus at 2:00 in the afternoon:

- April 11, 2002 – Pre Bid Conference
- April 19, 2002 - Opening of Bids

Bidding documents will be issued to qualified bidders from March 18 to 22, 2002 at the UPV-OVCA. Cost of the bidding documents is Two Thousand Pesos and are considered non-refundable.

UPV reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect or informality contained therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. UPV further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in connection with the said bidding.

(Sgd.) **LORENZA B. PADOJINOG**
Vice Chancellor for Administration

(PDI--Mar. 8 & 15, 2002)

Rotary club launches Project Roselle

THE ROTARY CLUB of Makati Ayala (RCMA) announced the launch of Project Roselle, its community service project to enable blind students to use computers. The launching ceremony will be held today, March 15, at 2 p.m. at the Ramon Magsaysay High School (RMHS) on España Avenue, Manila. To be turned over to the Special Education Unit of RMHS is a full computer system with the software and peripherals required by blind high school students. Witnessing the turnover ceremonies will be Rotary District 3830 officials, accompanied by 13 Japanese Rotarians from the Rotary Club of Kyushu (District 2700) which will also be giving a World Community Service (WCS) grant amounting to ¥200,000 (about $1,500) to RCMA for its Project Roselle initiative.

Project Roselle is named after Roselle Ambubuyog, a blind college student who graduated Valedictorian last year from the Ateneo University. It is a vehicle setup by the RCMA to help actualize Roselle's dream to set up Resource Centers for the Blind in selected schools throughout the Philippines. For inquiries regarding the project, call RCMA's secretariat at 895-1632 or e-mail to rlm@mozcom.com.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
March 8, 2002

INVITATION FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Housing Authority is inviting interested contractors who have completed similar projects (at least 50% of Contract Cost) within the last three (3) years and accredited with PCAB/IAC, to bid for the contract listed below:

Contract Package	Scope of Works	Contract Cost (Php)	PCAB Category	IAC Classification
1. PCSO-NHA Kapalaran Village Project, Camarin, Caloocan City	Land development	30.00 M.	AA	Large "A" for Roads

A. Eligibility Statement forms, bid documents/ plans as well other information are available at the Office of the BAC Secretariat, 2nd Floor, NHA Main Building, Diliman, Quezon City upon submission of the following a) Letter of Intent; b) PCAB/IAC License; c) Certificate of Completion/ Acceptance and Contract Agreement of completed similar project; and d) Presentation of above-cited original documents for authentication purposes.
B. Interested contractors may contact the BAC Technical/Secretariat at telephone nos. 926-5816 and 928-4561 to 65 local 262 for additional information.
C. Payment of non-refundable fee of P2,500.00 per set shall be received only from authorized representatives.
D. Bid deposits shall be in the form of cash, Manager's or Cashier's Check.
E. Deadline of submission of LOI/issuance of bid documents is on April 2, 2002. Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference and other bidding activities shall be announced through bid bulletins.
F. NHA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive formally any minor defect thereon, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **JOSEPH PETER S. SISON**
Assistant General Manager
Chairman, Bid and Award Committee

(PDI - March 15, 22 & 30, 2002)

OBITUARIES

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have ever-lasting life."
John 3:16

Message of Thanks

We, the family of

BENJAMIN "Benjie" MANGIBIN TOLENTINO

Who joined our Creator on February 25, 2002

would like to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who in so many ways condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

Card of Thanks

The Diocese of Urdaneta
(Urdaneta City, Pangasinan)
The Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan
(Dagupan City)
The Rural Bank of Mangaldan
(Mangaldan, Pangasinan)

His parents **Andres C. Jacinto** (†), and **Lourdes V. Jacinto** (†); His brothers **Adventur** (†) wife **Imelda** (†); children **Jocelyn** (†), **Joel, Malou** and **Jennifer** (†)

Atty. **Filomeno V. Jacinto** (†); wife **Dr. Lourdes**; children **Babette** and **Alan**; Sister **Dr. Marie V. Jacinto**, Ph.D
The **Jacinto, Espino, Villamil** families
and other relatives of the late

Reverend Father Andres Dimas V. Jacinto

Born: March 25, 1938
Ordained Priest - November 28, 1970
Died: March 6, 2002

Wish to convey their most profound gratitude and sincere thanks to all those who offered Masses, prayers, sent flowers, gave tokens, kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and to those who condoled with them in their hour of bereavement.

PRIMITIVA SOBREPEÑA ESGUERRA

(Wife of the late **Dr. Trinidad C. Esguerra**,
Former Chief, Tarlac Provincial Hospital)

Has peacefully joined the Lord on the 12th day of March 2002 at the age of 93.

Her bereaved children and grandchildren, **Teresita, Nellie & Bartolome de Leon, Gilbert & Christine, Wilfredo & Beatriz Esguerra, Andrew, Sandra & Eloisa, Edward, Chico Rio Esguerra, Belinda & Joselito Julloso, Angelica & Angela** and other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Chapel-3, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Friday, March 22, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
2 Corinthians 5:8

Rejoice in a joyful homecoming!

NIEVES MAIGUE JAMIR

widow of **Alberto MK Jamir**
Died on March 13, 2002

Her children **Belen, Claro & Zoila, Ramon, Celia, Sarah, Amante & Jel Caronongan**; grandchildren **Jay** and **Didi Jamir, Dream** and **Tim Earp, Sarj** and **Oscar Francisco, Pia** and **Ria Caronongan, AJ** and **Paui Jamir**; great granddaughter **Ally**; surviving brother, sisters & in-laws **Caridad Ruiz-Maigue, Fanny Tulao, Josefino & Olivia Cenizal, Ester Solis, Edgar & Emelina Ner-Maigue, Elisa K. Jamir, Evangelina J. Macalindong** and **Dr. Tomas Basa**; and other relatives request everyone to pray for her eternal life and peace.

Her remains lie at the Central Chapel, St. Jerome Emiliani Church Mortuary, Alabang Town Center, Muntinlupa City and will be transferred to the family residence in Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite on Sunday, March 17, 2002.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. at Manila Memorial Park Crematory, Sucat, Parañaque City.

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS
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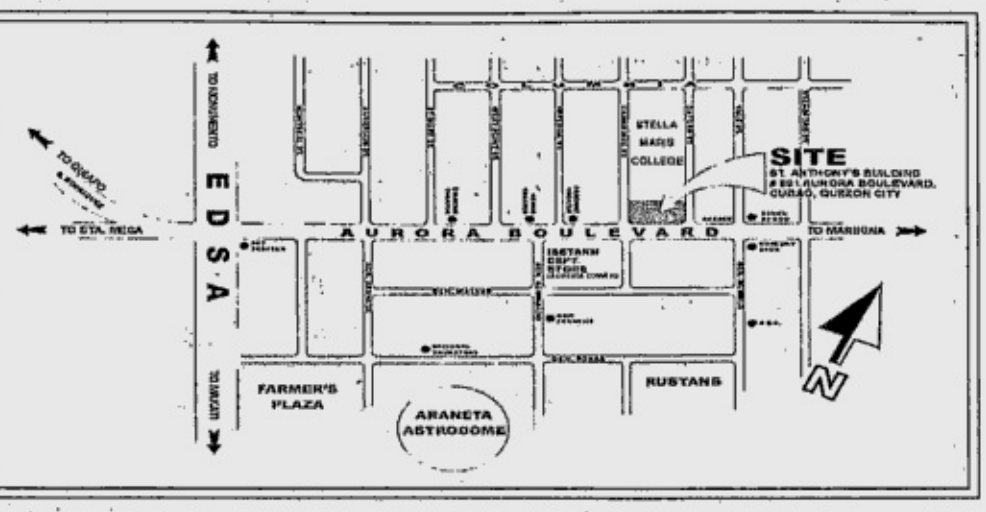
For inquiries, please call **912-9008** to **11**.



REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON GOOD GOVERNMENT
REGIONAL OFFICE NO. 8
TACLOBAN CITY

INVITATION TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) invites interested parties to participate in the sealed bidding for the lease of the ground floor of the People's Center and Library as venue for "Summer and Fiesta Bazaar and Trade Fair" from **May 15, 2002** to **July 15, 2002**, located at Real St., Tacloban City.

The bidding guidelines will be available from PCGG Office, Asset Management Department, 3rd floor, IRC building, 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City and at the PCGG Regional Office, Nipa Hut, Jones St., Tacloban City, starting **March 18, 2002**. For inquiries, please contact Darwin Altea Tel. No. 7260034 and Renor Dauag Tel. No. (053) 3213413.

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated after their submission at 10:00AM on **April 2, 2002** in the presence of the bidders at the PCGG Office, Asset Management Dept., 3rd Flr., IRC bldg., 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **RENOR O. DAUAG**
Officer-In-Charge
PCGG, Region 8

(PDI--Mar 15, 16, 17, 2002)

Department of Agriculture
PHILIPPINE CARABAO CENTER
at CENTRAL LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Carabao Center invites interested suppliers to pre-qualify and to bid for the supply and delivery of:

1 unit Generating Set 50 KVA
1 unit L-200 DT (Dual Tractor)
Construction Materials
Supply of Labor & Materials/Equipment for repair of cold room

Pre-qualification requirements can be secured from Mr. Ronaldo A. Sadural Property section, Philippine Carabao Center National Gene Pool and Headquarters CLSU Compound, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija and Eustaquio C. Pagaduan, Philippine Carabao Center at CLSU Office located at Central Luzon State University, Science City of Muñoz, starting **April 1, 2002**. Last day of submission of pre-qualification documents will be on **April 5, 2002**.

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The Philippine Carabao Center reserves the right to reject any of all bids, waive any formality in such bids, and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the government.

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Center Director

(PDI - March 15, 18 & 27, 2002)

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NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
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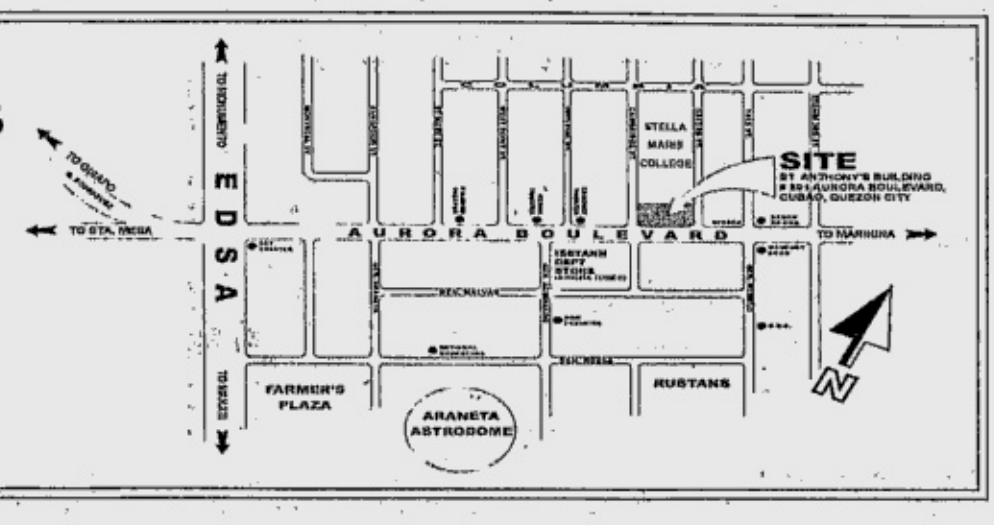


Gov't to abolish 92 'inactive' agencies, task forces by June

By Clarissa S. Batino

BUDGET Secretary Emilia Boncodin said the government was planning to dissolve 92 agencies and task forces attached to the Office of the President before June, 15 more than what was earlier announced.

In an interview, Boncodin said the abolition of 77 agencies and task forces would save for the government some P56 million worth of salaries and overhead expenses each year.

The cut will affect less than 110 people, she said.

"There will be a second wave of streamlining that will involve 10 to 15 more agencies that are bigger," Boncodin announced.

"The offices to be affected by the second round employs 10 or more people and are bigger units compared to those we have closed recently," she said.

Boncodin, a member of the Presidential Commission on Effective Governance, said the streamlining of the bureaucracy would be an ongoing concern of the Macapagal administration.

Once the government has trimmed down the size of the Office of the President, it will then move on to cutting down to size the departments.

Boncodin's presidential committee was tasked to streamline the bureaucracy.

Under Executive Order No. 72, the Macapagal administration abolished 61 agencies and task forces attached to the Office of the President and listed 16 others as likely candidates for dissolution before April 15.

The order also transferred 13 offices from the Office of the President to other departments.

Included in the 61 agencies abolished was the Economic Coordinating Council established by the Estrada administration.

"Agencies that have fulfilled their mandate or have remained dormant shall be abolished, deactivated, merged, consolidated or transferred to other departments," according to EO 72.

The presidential committee will continue to pinpoint agencies to be abolished or transferred that may not be covered by the initial list.

The ECC was a smaller and more powerful Cabinet created by ousted President Joseph Estrada supposedly to fast-track his economic agenda and win the support of the business community.

Also included in the list of 61 to be deleted were the task force to study and determine the settlement of the obligations to Swiss imports inspector Societe Generale d'Surveillance, the ad-hoc fact-finding committee on behest loans, the Presidential Retirement Income Commission and the Economic Mobilization Group.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said the abolition of almost 80 offices was part of the government's reengineering plan that would help it save on cost and trim the bureaucracy.

UCPB says it's planning to sell contested shares

THE UNITED Coconut Planters Bank said yesterday it was planning to sell part or all of the 96-percent interest being contested by the government and the group of San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco to a new investor who would be willing to increase the bank's capital by about P6 billion.

UPCB chair and chief executive Edward Go said he would secure an interim agreement with the government and Cojuangco that would allow UCPB to increase its capital while dealing with an ownership row.

Go denied that the bank was seeking liquidity assistance from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

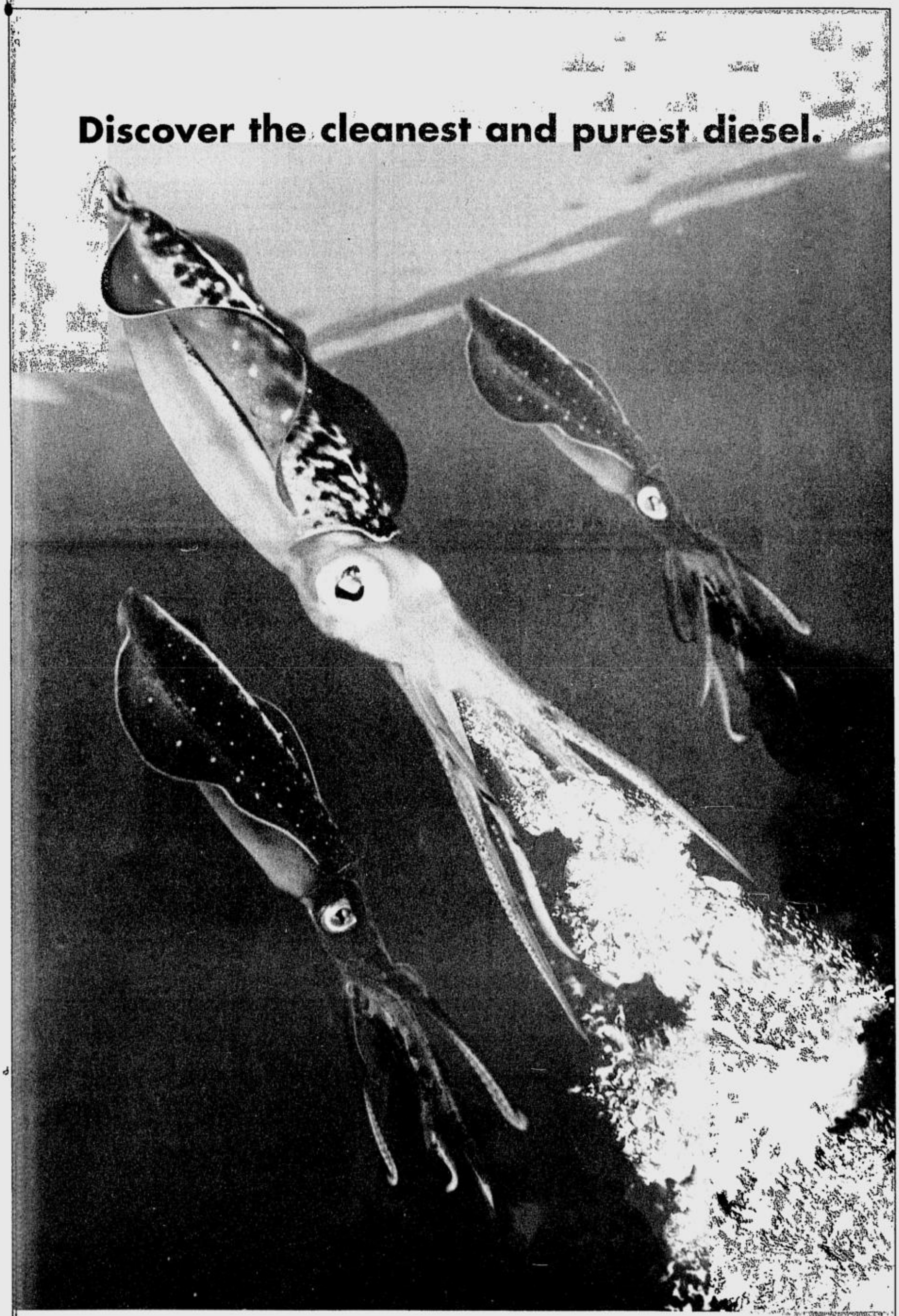
Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura supported Go's position.

"We are not having liquidity problems, and we have no plans to tap the BSP facility because a bank only goes to the BSP if it has liquidity problems. We are solvent, and we are liquid," he stressed.

Go admitted, however, that the bank was facing a critical capital inadequacy.

He said UCPB planned to solve this by getting a strategic partner that would put in fresh equity instead of tapping the so-called tier two capital, which he said was more expensive.

"We need an interim solution while the ownership (row) has not been resolved. If the shareholders will agree, we can come up with an arrangement where they will sell out and the proceeds will be placed in an escrow or they can agree to be diluted and let a strategic partner come in with fresh capital," Go said. ***Clarissa S. Batino***



Agriculture chief says strong demand for pork to continue

AGRICULTURE Secretary Leonardo Montemayor said yesterday investment opportunities in the swine business would remain robust this year, as he saw an increase in demand for pork by a growing population.

The livestock subsector, meanwhile, will repeat its good performance and contribute to agricultural growth this year, he added.

"Raising hogs will remain profitable for both backyard and commercial farms because the country's per capita pork consumption has been steadily rising from 14 kilograms in 1995 to over 16 kg in year 2000," said Montemayor, who cited figures from the Bureau of Animal Industry.

"Pork has remained the most favored among the available meat products in the market due to its greater versatility in preparation and its relatively affordable price," he said.

Montemayor said with the population hitting 77 million last year, demand for pork had never been stronger.

Local hog raisers have asked the agriculture department to find ways to bring down the prices of hog feed so they can compete more effectively with imports.

They have also asked the government to address problems involving the lack of market infrastructure, transport facilities and farm-to-market roads, as it pursues its animal health programs.

The volume of hog production grew 4.4 percent to 1.58 million metric tons last year from its 2000 level of 1.517 million metric tons.

Digitel unit, US call center sign agreement

eTELECARE International, a call center company based in the United States, has inked an agreement with DigitelOne, the data communications arm of the Gokongweis' Digital Telecommunications Philippines Inc., for the installation of a communications backbone necessary for the operation and delivery of eTelecare's call center services to local companies and those in the South Asian region.

The agreement calls for the provision of superior digital telephony and Internet bandwith redundancy that will enable eTelecare to receive and transmit voice and data communications either from its clients or its customers simultaneously and in real time.

Aside from a tried and tested business model developed by eTelecare, the US firm boasts of the integrity, security, and reliability of its call center services in handling customer communications.

The company, in a statement, said that its touch points like voice, Web chat, e-mail VOIP (voice over Internet) and facsimile would greatly depend on DigitelOne's ability to secure fast and efficient connectivity using a broad spectrum of enhanced data communications platforms to as wide a network as possible.

"We have chosen DigitelOne to be our partner in our operations in the Philippines because of its technical superiority over all other options considered," eTelecare vice president Patrick Bevill said.

ARMM chief courts businessmen abroad

THE HEAD of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao yesterday called on foreign businessmen to take advantage of investment opportunities in the "poorest region in the poorest island complex in the Philippines."

In a speech before a gathering of foreign business organization hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce, ARMM Governor Parouk Hussin said there were profits to be made in Mindanao, citing the experiences of top corporations like Dole, Del Monte and San Miguel, which flourished in the resources-rich but poverty-stricken and strife-torn region.

Hussin said as the breadbasket of the Philippines, the ARMM would benefit from the government's ongoing focus on agriculture development after decades of favoring industrialization policies.

Hussin said the ARMM had the capacity to develop its own investment incentive scheme, and its own taxation regime, which his office could tailor to suit the needs of investors keen on putting their money in the region's infrastructure projects, such as ports and ports facilities.

He said the ARMM still lagged behind most of the rest of the country in terms of development in telecommunications, port and port facilities, irrigation, and road networks. ***Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.***

WB sees South Asia growth rising to 4.9% in 2002

ISLAMABAD—Developing countries in South Asia, which have been hit by the global economic slowdown, are likely to see a rebound in growth to 4.9 percent this year, the World Bank said in a report released Wednesday.

"The South Asia region is expected to recover modestly in 2002 with an average growth rate of 4.9 percent and accelerating thereafter to rates above 5 percent," the bank said in its Global Development Finance 2002 report.

Improved agricultural output in the first half of 2002 would give a boost to the economy, it said.

"This should have a stimulating effect on the industrial sector, particularly the durable goods sector, because traditionally farmers tend to buy big-ticket items during periods of good harvest and consequently increased incomes."

Last year gross domestic product (GDP) growth for the region averaged 4.3 percent, which was up from 4 percent recorded in 2000.

The bank said many developing countries have improved their performance but warned that they are still being hit by the global downturn.

"Many poor countries have improved their policies, institutions and performance in the past decade. Because aid increasingly is channeled to these countries, aid is more effective today than ever before," World Bank chief economist Nicholas Stern said.

"But even successful poor countries are being hurt by lower global growth, adverse trends in commodity prices, and declining aid."

South Asian exports last year were hit by the global economic slowdown after the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the United States and regional tensions, the bank said.

The slowdown in world trade and regional tensions slowed merchandise exports from the region to 1.1-percent growth in 2001 compared with 12.3 percent in 2000, it said.

South Asia's agricultural sector, however, recovered in the second half of last year, with a bumper cotton crop in Pakistan and a good harvest in India.

Bangladesh posted around 6-percent growth in gross agricultural output, reaping the benefits of government policies that encourage cultivation of high-yield crops, the bank said. ***AFP***

Greenspan cites new reasons for optimism about economy

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan found new reasons to be optimistic about the economy Wednesday, and the economists responsible for determining when the recession is over said it may be coming to an end.

Greenspan, who last week voiced his own opinion that the country's first recession in a decade had ended, told a bankers' group that he believed there has been more "encouraging signs" of strength in recent days.

But as he did in his congressional testimony, Greenspan said the rebound was likely to be modest, at least in the early going, because there is little pent-up consumer demand, given that Americans spent strongly last year on autos and new homes.

Analysts said Greenspan's latest remarks supported their view that the central bank will not feel pressure in coming months to start raising interest rates to prevent higher inflation.

Adding to the optimism about the economy, the National Bureau of Economic Research, which has the job of officially declaring the beginning and end of recessions, posted a memo on its website this week noting the favorable increase in employment in February that the government reported on Friday.

"Payroll employment increased slightly in February, the first increase in seven months," the NBER said. "Other signs indicate that the decline in activity that began last year may be coming to an end."

The NBER, composed of academic economists, announced in November that the country had entered a recession in March 2001, ending a record 10-year economic expansion.

The new memo said that "at some future date" the six academic economists who make up the NBER's business cycle dating committee would declare an ending date for the downturn.

But the memo cautioned that this call could be months away, noting that the NBER did not declare the 1990-1991 recession at an end until December 1992, 21 months after the March 1991 date it selected as the month the downturn ended.

In his speech delivered by satellite to a Honolulu meeting of the Independent Community Bankers of America, Greenspan repeated some of the optimistic views he has made in congressional testimony in recent weeks.

"We have seen increasing signs that some of the forces restraining the economy over the past year are starting to diminish and that activity is beginning to firm," he said.

Last week, Greenspan was even more direct, saying, "The recent evidence increasingly suggests that an economic expansion is already under way."

In his appearance Wednesday, Greenspan noted the favorable unemployment report that came out on Friday, showing that businesses added 66,000 workers to their payrolls, the first increase in seven months.

"In recent days, encouraging signs of strengthening underlying trends in final demand have emerged, although the dimensions of the pick-up remain uncertain," Greenspan said. ***AP***

PC sales to grow 3% in 2002–study

WASHINGTON—Worldwide sales of personal computers are expected to increase 3 percent this year, a market research group said Wednesday in an upward revision of a forecast made last year.

International Data Corp. raised its forecast for worldwide PC shipment growth in 2002 from the December forecast of 1.8 percent in response to signs of growth in key segments, including a turnaround in the US market.

"Economic indicators in the United States have finally begun to point consistently to a recovery," said Roger Kay, an IDC analyst.

"Given that productivity and confidence measures correlate closely with PC shipments, we can expect improving performance in the PC market through the year. Thus, we have raised our outlook from slightly negative to slightly positive in terms of expected year-on-year growth in 2002."

IDC expects worldwide PC shipments to continue to decline year on year in the first quarter of 2002, with the second quarter roughly on par with a year ago. Growth should pick up to about 10 percent in the third and fourth quarter.

Last year, IDC said PC sales globally fell 5.2 percent to 121.8 million units, with the US market down some 12 percent.

In 2002, IDC projects 2.5-percent growth in the United States, with strong gains in the home market offsetting a slight decline in business sales.

"With growing signs of economic recovery supporting the market, both consumers and commercial buyers are feeling more confident making significant IT purchases," said IDC's Loren Loverde.

"By yearend we expect consumers will be even more optimistic and that their PC spending will reflect that. Commercial spending should also improve, as replacement buying picks up."

With the exception of Asia-Pacific, all regions grew slightly faster than expected in the fourth quarter of 2001, and the United States recovered more quickly than other regions, IDC said.

China, which now accounts for 42 percent of shipments in Asia Pacific excluding Japan, will continue to drive growth in the region, IDC said.

Although Japan's economy continues to hold down sales, IDC does not see further erosion in the market in Japan.

The European market is expected to recover slower than the United States due to reserved commercial spending and because the slowdown in 2001 was less dramatic, the firm said. ***AFP***

US retail sales rise 0.3%

WASHINGTON—US shoppers pried their purses slightly more open in February, the government said Wednesday, but the pick-up was weaker than had been anticipated by investors.

US retail sales rose 0.3 percent in February from the previous month, slightly lower than market expectations of 0.9-percent growth, the Commerce Department said.

Sales had dropped 0.3 percent in January.

Wall Street fell in response. The blue chip barometer, the Dow Jones industrials average, slid 106.01 points, or one percent, to 10,526.34 in early afternoon trade.

Nevertheless, analysts said US consumers remained a steady engine for the economy.

February's improvement was still the steepest rise in retail sales since October last year, fueled by a gentle pick-up in sales of motor vehicles, furniture and electronics.

Sales at auto dealerships climbed 0.4 percent in February—the first monthly increase since October.

Car sales had been on a steady decline since peaking in October when auto dealerships launched zero-percent financing offers to induce buyers after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"Consumer spending remains resilient," said Merrill Lynch economist Gerald Cohen.

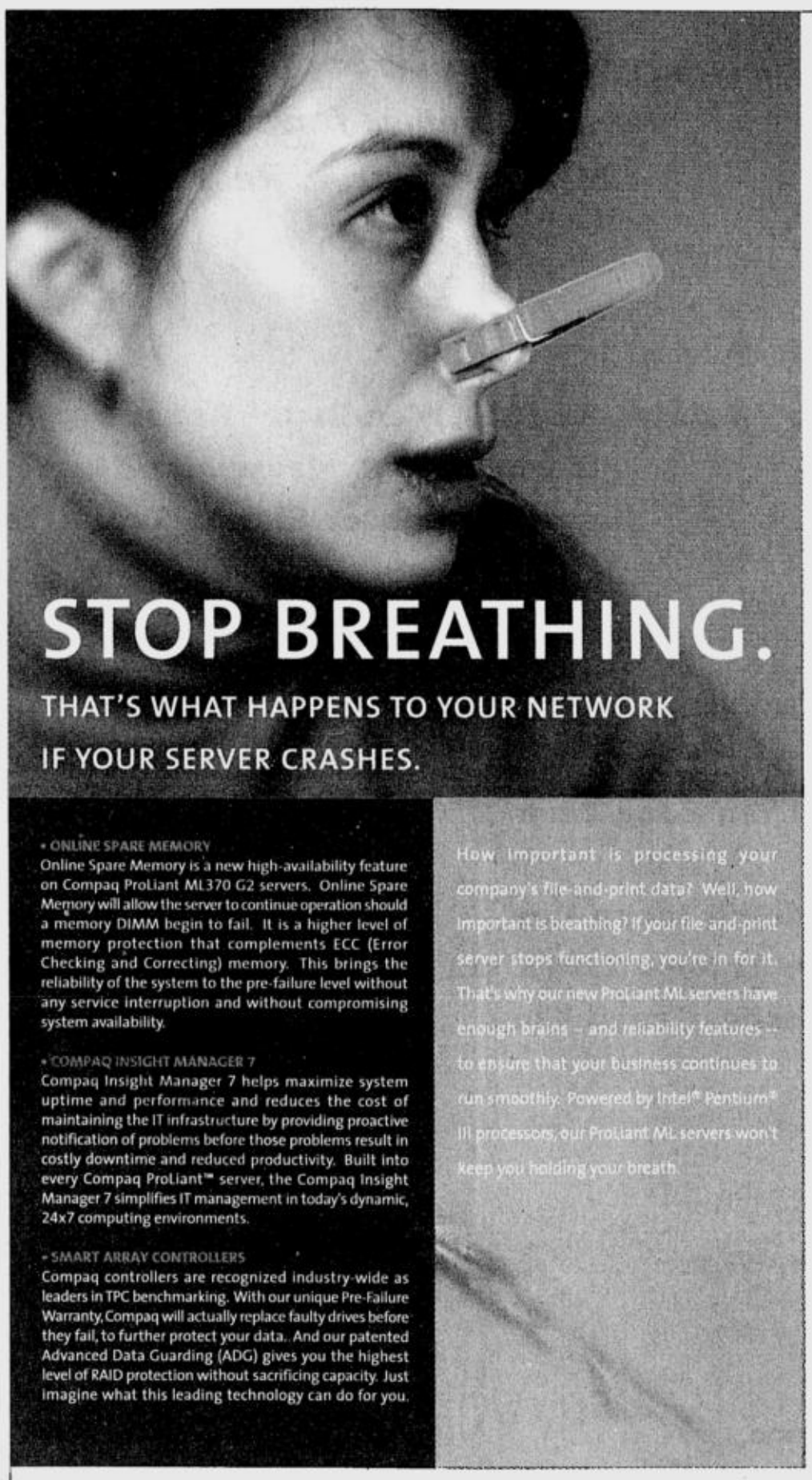
Steep discounting may have accounted for the lackluster sales increase, which is measured in dollar terms, he said. Stores also may be running out of stock after many months of whittling down inventories.

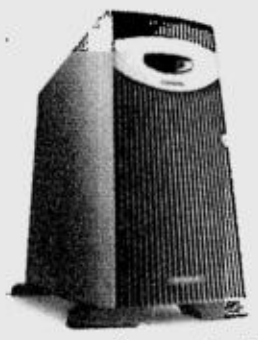
"This suggests that production will pick up," Cohen added.

"Inventories look like they are being liquidated at a much slower pace in the first quarter and should add at least two percentage points to GDP (gross domestic product) growth," he said.

He expected consumer spending to remain steady, growing 3 percent for this year, as jobs growth resumed. "That leaves plenty of room for upside surprises."

Henry Willmore, economist at Barclays Capital, said the data threw cold water on any expectations that the US Federal Reserve might increase interest rates in May. ***AFP***





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Members of the Board, Officers and Staff of
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Asiaworld Internationale Group
announce with deep sorrow the passing away
of our beloved Founder

TAN YU

who died on 12 March 2002 at 4:45 a.m. in Houston, Texas
at the age of 75.
He is survived by his bereaved loving wife ***Pacita See Tan***
elder brother ***Jesus K. Typoco, Sr.***
Chien Pao Yun *and* ***Ruby Lim Enrique***

eldest devoted & loving daughter
Elizabeth "Pin-Pin" Kalaw

daughter
Emilia "Bien-Bien" Roxas
& husband Andrew Mon-Lin Yang
granddaughter Sienna Tanyu Yang

eldest son
Elton See Tan
& wife Carolyn Lee Tan
grandchildren : Tanyu III
Carel Lee Tan
Elton Tanyu, Jr.

daughter
Betty See Tan
& husband Van Hong Tuon
children :
Boris Randolph Tanyu Van
Christophe Antoine Tanyu Van
Michelle Jessica Tanyu Van

daughter
Elena Tanyu Coyiuto
& husband Peter Go Coyiuto
children :
Stephanie Michel Tanyu Coyiuto
Alexander Peter Tanyu Coyiuto
Sofia Elaine Tanyu Coyiuto
Samantha Mae Tanyu Coyiuto

daughter
Josefina Typoco
& husband Clive Tien

son
Benjamin Typoco

son
Washington Typoco

daughter
Bessie Typoco

daughter
Virginia Typoco
& husband Don So

daughter
Diane Enrique
& husband Clay Daniel Smith
children :
Gabrielle Elissa Smith
Jessica Danielle Smith

son
Genghis Khan Enrique

daughter
Margarette Enrique

son
Howard Mao Enrique

His remains will arrive in Manila on 17 March 2002 (Sunday)
and will lie in state in his family residence
at 16 Guirayan Street corner Palansa Street, Santa Mesa Heights, Quezon City.

Other funeral arrangements will be announced later.

BANQUE de France governor Jean-Claude Trichet gestures during a press conference following a Franco-German summit attended by the countries' finance ministers in Paris March 13, 2002. German Finance Minister Hans Eichel said that conditions existed for a robust recovery later this year. AP

EU economy recovering, growth to improve–Solbes

MADRID—The European economy is recovering, although growth in the first and the second quarters of 2002 will be minimal, with a bigger bounce in the second half of the year, EU Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes said Wednesday.

Speaking in an interview given to Spanish state television late Wednesday, Solbes said: "I haven't the least doubt (that the economy is recovering) . . . there are some data that do not admit discussion . . . and the European crisis is behind us.

"In the first and the second quarter we know that (EU growth) will improve somewhat, but very slowly . . . with very, very small growth and greater growth in the second half."

The reason behind that spurt would be the impact of looser monetary policy, an improvement in inflation and the rebound in the US economy, he added.

Solbes, a Spaniard, was speaking ahead of the European summit set to start in Barcelona on Friday. The summit will discuss ways the EU can improve on economic growth via reforms.

The summit will discuss how to improve productivity in Europe to make the region the worlds most prosperous by the year 2010.

"Achieving full employment is complicated. Creating more jobs will mean investment, making legislation more flexible, improving workers' adaptability. We have a lot to do," Solbes said.

Discussions will focus on reducing the productivity gap with the United States, integrating financial markets more fully, improving transport links, opening energy markets, improving education and retraining as well as making labor markets more flexible. *Reuters*

Hong Kong and Singapore economies unmade in China?

SINGAPORE—Could a burgeoning China drive Singapore and Hong Kong the way of the dinosaur? Some economists fear the answer could be yes.

China's emergence as a manufacturing powerhouse spells competition for every Asian economy, but none face a more compelling need to shape up for the challenge than the two city economies.

Each has got a different response strategy—while Singapore scrambles to reshape itself, Hong Kong is betting on the status quo.

While most Asian nations can look within—to seek growth in domestic consumption—if their export engines start to sputter, the relatively small populations of Hong Kong and Singapore give them little choice but to look outside for growth.

Hong Kong ranked ninth and Singapore 15th among the world's top exporters in 2000, according to the WTO, leaving each just a narrow space to expand export growth.

To address the shortcoming, each is taking a different tack.

While Hong Kong is betting on geography, being well placed to plug into the Chinese growth engine, Singapore is gearing up to become a more services- and knowledge-driven economy and reduce the impact of manufacturing cycles.

Shanghai threat

But the clock is ticking. Regional analysts said within 10 years' time the emerging industrial, port and commercial hubs inside China may not leave the rivals much to fight over.

"The debate over the rivalry between Hong Kong and Singapore has . . . become a side issue, in the sense that you are pretty much fighting for the spoils rather than the real thing," said Paul Alapat, Nomura International's economist in Hong Kong.

"It's inevitable. China has such a huge trained labor force and it's still cheap, it's going to be virtually impossible to compete."

Low-cost Shanghai offers the most immediate and direct competitive threat. It threatens to soon deprive Hong Kong of much of China related air and shipping traffic.

In the future, many multinational firms now operating out of Hong Kong and Singapore could move their regional headquarters there, along with a large share of investments and financial and manufacturing activities.

Last year, Shanghai's gross domestic product grew 10.2 percent, while Hong Kong saw growth of just 0.1 percent and Singapore GDP shrank 2 percent.

Fading away viability

International financial adviser Marc Faber, dubbed "Dr. Doom" for his often gloomy views, said the viability of financial services centers such as Hong Kong and Singapore would fade as cheaper or virtually free communications allow investors to trade from their location of choice.

"In future, there won't be a global financial center," he said. "The institutions can be anywhere they want to be. You won't have to be in a financial center any more."

Faber, who predicted in 1990 that Shanghai would emerge as a major market, said more mainland cities have the same potential.

"Hong Kong or Singapore, over time they will become relatively unimportant because in China there would be at least 10 cities that have economies the size of Hong Kong," he said.

Andy Xie, chief economist of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, said China's challenge to Hong Kong and Singapore could lead to a decline in living standards.

"The issue is whether any plan can shield you from Chinese competition and hence preserve the living standard. I think the truth is somewhere in between," he said.

Xie said investors may be willing to pay a premium for the developed infrastructure, tax incentives and business-friendly legal environment of Hong Kong and Singapore. But the size of that premium depends on how much they restructure their economies.

Search for growth

Alapat said both would have to seek new growth engines as manufacturing, for Singapore, and property, for Hong Kong, may not remain such effective growth drivers as before. "Most of the easy solutions are now behind us."

Alapat said Hong Kong may be feeling the competitive pressure from China much more intensely at the moment.

But Alapat and Xie both agreed that its proximity to China and North Asia would remain its biggest edge over Singapore.

"Hong Kong doesn't need to restructure to the same extent as Singapore," Xie said.

He said Hong Kong could continue to be a center for China's Pearl River delta—a very large economy of 80 million people with exports already above $100 billion and growing.

Bridge the disadvantage

Singapore, despite being cheaper than Hong Kong, still has to figure out the level at which investors would think its relative geographic disadvantage has been bridged.

Sanjeev Sanyal, Deutsche Bank's regional economist, said Singapore was encouraging local companies to tap into growth outside the citystate.

More than half of the earnings of telecoms giant SingTel are already generated overseas.

Singapore wants to encourage knowledge-based industries like biotechnology, so the emphasis would be on incentives like low personal income tax, Sanyal said.

"Given their track record, one has to give them the benefit of doubt that they will do it again. But having said that when you make a one-directional bet and if it goes wrong it goes wrong big time," he said. *Reuters*

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Relaxed Opec set to rollover curbs in crude oil production

VIENNA—Opec oil ministers converging on Vienna on Thursday looked set to rollover output cuts that have helped to drive prices up to six-month highs, saying they would probably review the situation again in June.

Algerian Oil Minister Chakib Khelil confirmed Opec was unlikely to change its production ceilings. "I do not think so," he told reporters here late on Wednesday, adding that Opec was likely to meet again in three months.

But while basking in the recent oil price recovery to around $24 a barrel, ministers of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) will likely offer a few words of caution over Iraq and Russia.

While much of the recent price rebound from a post-Sept. 11 slump is the result of producer output cuts and signs of recovery in the US economy, analysts attribute the recent rally to concerns about the prospect of US-led military action on Iraq.

If such jitters subside, the oil price could head lower again, they say.

Opec will moreover be reluctant to appear too content with the current market situation for fear that Russia might abandon its export curb.

Russia's cut was crucial in forging an Opec-led producer pact to skim almost 2 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil from world markets from the start of this year, of which Opec's share was 1.5 million bpd.

But Russia was reluctant to join the deal in the first place, and analysts doubt how much longer Russia will stick to its export cut, which has swamped its domestic markets with oil.

Experts say however that Russia's support is no longer so important to Opec, partly given of the price rebound, but also because non-members Norway and Mexico have pledged to stick with their export cuts even if Russia does not.

Opec ministers will also be loath to appear to be cashing in on a rising oil price, which some economists warn could damage a tentative global economic recovery.

"Right now, things are very fragile, very uncertain. The economy is just picking up, so we better not rock the boat," Khelil said.

"We are seeking what we can get right now. As you know, Opec is not the one that controls the situation right now," he said.

For now, though, Opec seems happy to make the most of a higher oil price.

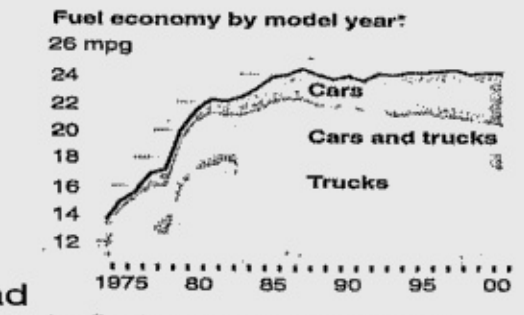
And unless prices start falling again, Opec may even be talking about output hikes in June to grab back market share from rival producers and deflect criticism that a high oil price is putting economic recovery at risk. *AFP*

High mileage standards on hold

The Senate rejected tough new automobile fuel economy requirements Wednesday in favor of a more industry-friendly proposal.

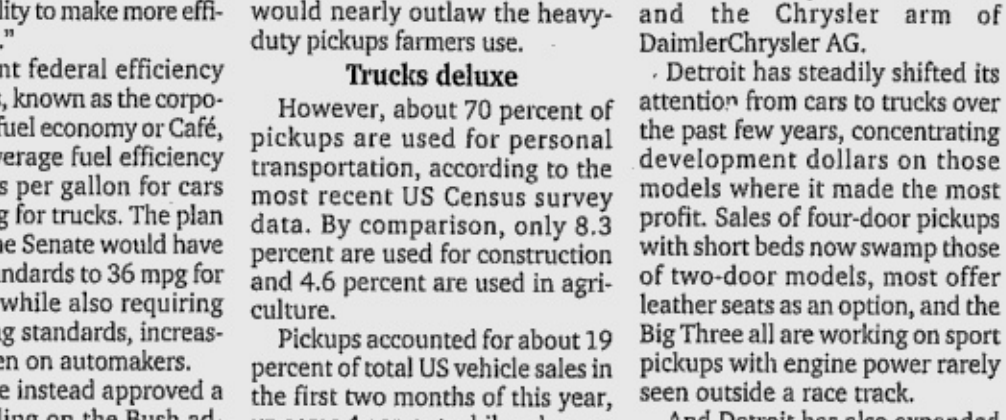
Efficiency falters

Gasoline economy improved steadily in the late 1970s and early 80s, but efficiency suffered with the soaring popularity of SUVs and minivans. Along with pickups, these vehicles account for nearly half of all vehicles sold.



The range on the road

Automakers currently must meet a fleet average of 27.5 mpg for sedans and 20.7 mpg for SUVs, minivans and pickups.



*Based on 45 percent highway driving, 55 percent city driving, 15,000 annual miles.

SOURCE: Environmental Protection Agency AP

Ernst and Young ditches merger talks with Andersen

WASHINGTON—Accountancy group Ernst and Young said Wednesday that it had scrapped merger talks with embattled rival Arthur Andersen because of its legal woes.

Arthur Andersen is reportedly facing a Thursday deadline to settle criminal charges over obstruction of justice for allegedly destroying documents related to its audit of Enron.

It also faces civil litigation and is under investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

"After reviewing the possibility of combining with Andersen, Ernst and Young has concluded that as long as Enron and other Andersen litigation matters are unresolved, it is not in the best interests of our people, clients and our firm to pursue such a combination," Ernst and Young said in a statement.

"We informed Andersen's leadership of our decision this morning." *AFP*

Big Three win with fuel economy break for pickups

DETROIT—The sword hanging over US automakers turned into a shield on Wednesday, as the US Senate not only rejected a stiff increase in fuel efficiency standards but barred future increases on pickup trucks, some of Detroit's most popular and profitable vehicles.

While senators who backed the move argued that such an exemption was necessary for pickup owners who use their vehicles to work on the farm or the construction site, the vast majority of pickups sold in the United States today are used for personal transportation.

Environmentalists decried the move, saying it would fuel growing US dependence on foreign oil and increasing emissions of greenhouse gases.

If the provision makes it into law, "it's an enormous step backward," said Michelle Robinson, a senior policy advocate with the Union of Concerned Scientists. "Words have been failing me on this . . . it's really sad given what we know about the industry's ability to make more efficient pickups."

The current federal efficiency requirements, known as the corporate average fuel economy or Café, call for an average fuel efficiency of 27.5 miles per gallon for cars and 20.7 mpg for trucks. The plan rejected by the Senate would have raised the standards to 36 mpg for all vehicles, while also requiring stricter testing standards, increasing the burden on automakers.

The Senate instead approved a measure calling on the Bush administration to set higher standards for cars and trucks—except for pickups.

The auto industry had claimed the higher standards could force them to stop building pickups, putting thousands of jobs at risk. It had also run ads in farming states warning that the higher standards would nearly outlaw the heavy-duty pickups farmers use.

Trucks deluxe

However, about 70 percent of pickups are used for personal transportation, according to the most recent US Census survey data. By comparison, only 8.3 percent are used for construction and 4.6 percent are used in agriculture.

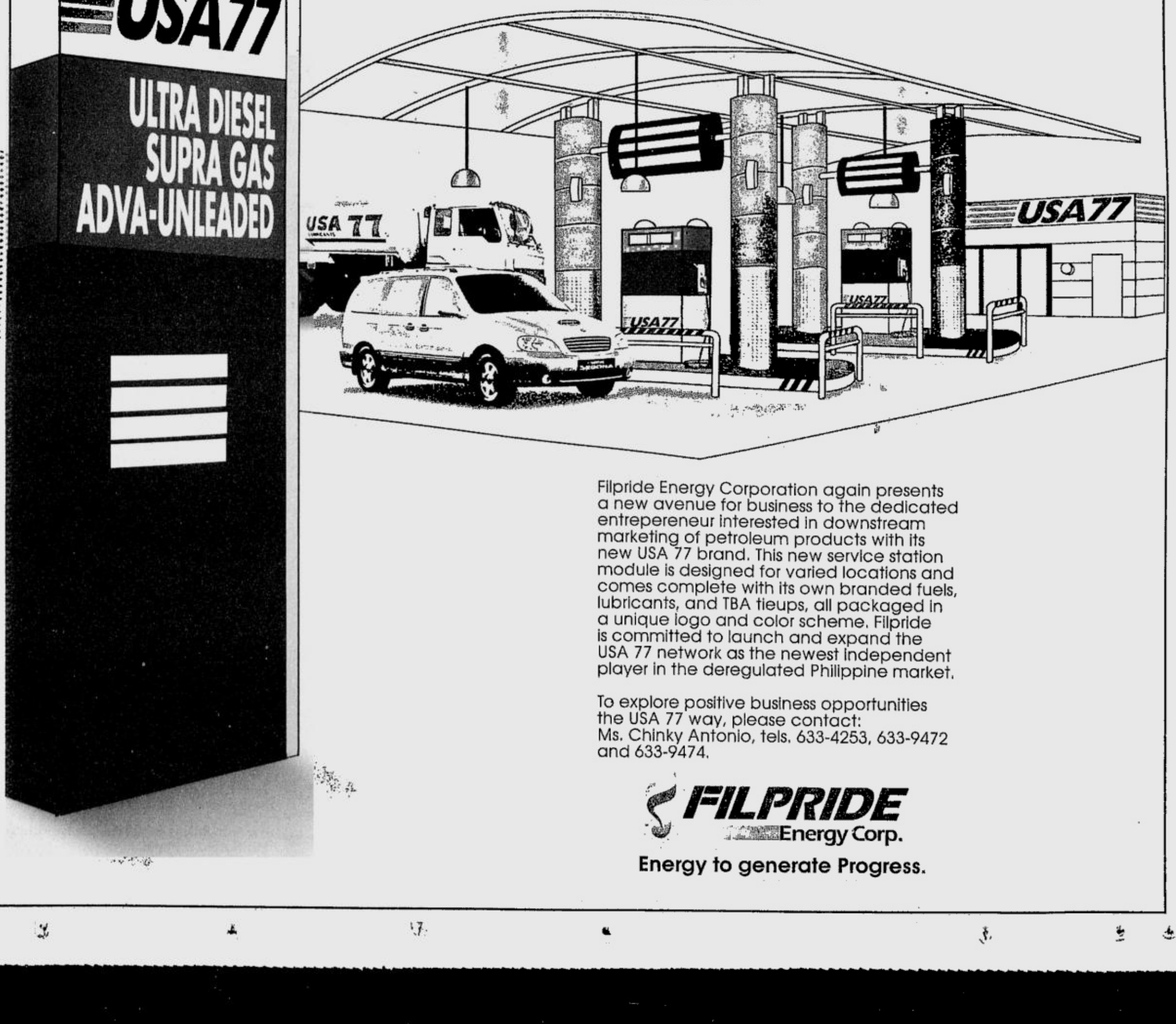
Pickups accounted for about 19 percent of total US vehicle sales in the first two months of this year, up some 4 percent while sales as a whole have fallen about 4 percent. The Ford F-Series and Chevrolet Silverado pickup lines are the perennial two top-selling vehicles in the United States.

But pickups, along with sport utility vehicles, provide a much larger share of the profits at General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and the Chrysler arm of DaimlerChrysler AG.

Detroit has steadily shifted its attention from cars to trucks over the past few years, concentrating development dollars on those models where it made the most profit. Sales of four-door pickups with short beds now swamp those of two-door models, most offer leather seats as an option, and the Big Three all are working on sport pickups with engine power rarely seen outside a race track.

And Detroit has also expanded into markets where pickups hadn't been before; Cadillac and Lincoln now sell $50,000 luxury pickups, with covered beds. *Reuters*

... leads right to a USA 77 service station.



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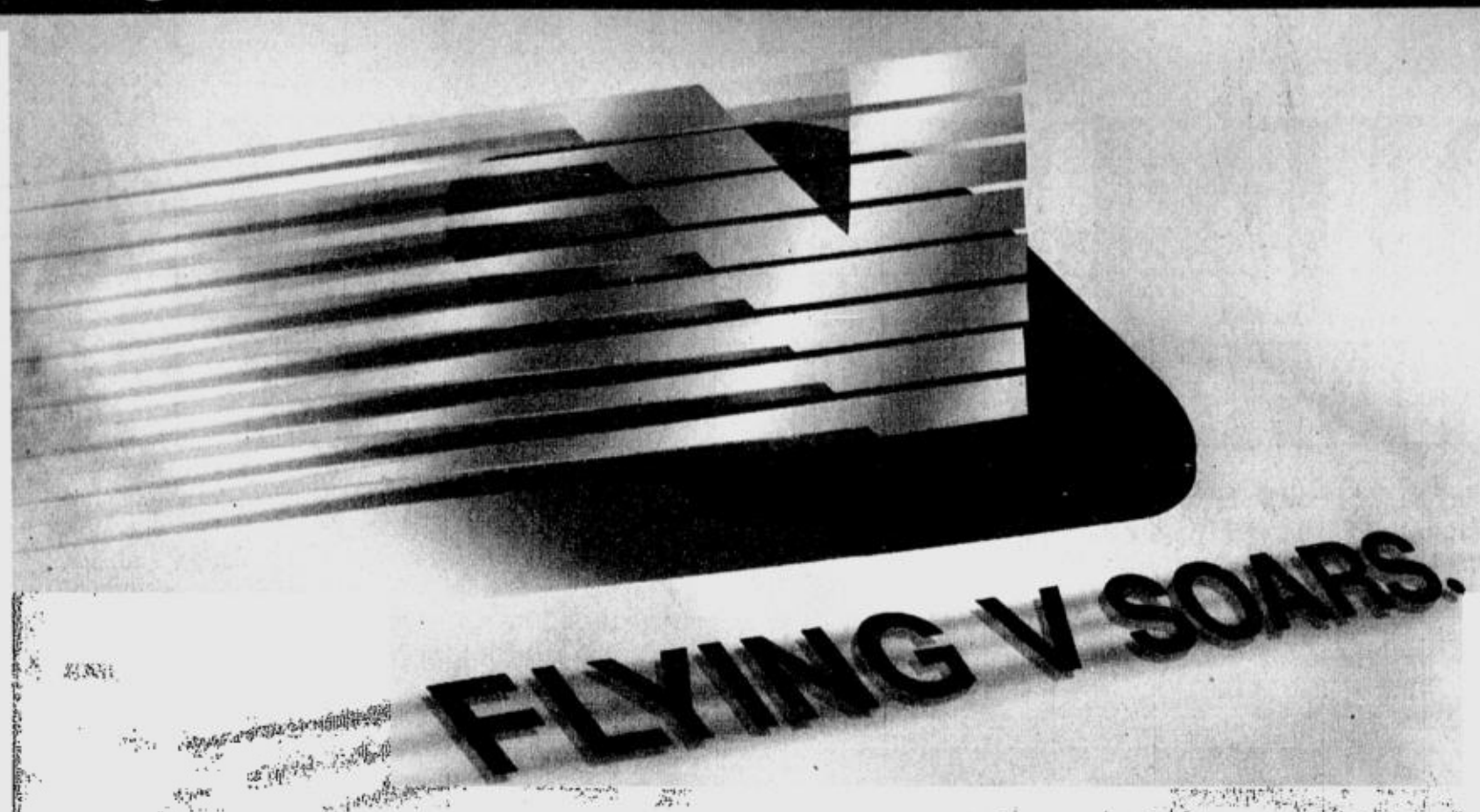

From Day One of deregulation, Flying V has vigorously pursued its strategy of continuous growth in its service station network, with 64 outlets now operating in Luzon to date, more to open in 2002, including the entry of Flying V into prime Visayas and Mindanao markets.

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2. 91 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City
3. Canlubang-Majada Out, Calamba, Laguna
4. Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City
5. F. Legaspi St. Parkwood Green Exec. Vill., Pasig City
6. Pres. Quirino Ave., Pandacan, M.M.
7. Brgy. Batong Bato, Quirino H-way. Nova., Q.C.
8. Balibago Rd., Sta. Rosa, Laguna
9. Villamor Air Base, Parañaque, M.M.
10. Circumferential Rd., Antipolo, Rizal
11. 148 M. Almeda St., Pateros, M.M.
12. 61A Sixto Antonio Ave., Maybunga, Pasig
13. Sagrada Familia, Hagonoy, Bulacan
14. Brgy. Ungos, Real, Quezon
15. Carmen, Zaragoza, Nueva Ecija
16. 46 National Rd., Sitio Sagbat, Morong, Rizal
17. Mc Arthur H-way, Malinta, Valenzuela, M.M.
18. Sandoval St., Bo. Palatio, Pasig City
19. Kentucky Lane, Olongapo City
20. Bo. San Roque, San Rafael, Bulacan
21. Plo St., Porac, Pampanga
22. #43 Velasquez St., Taytay, Rizal
23. Brgy. Tagapo, Sta Rosa, Laguna
24. Brgy. Lanbac, Mabitac, Laguna
25. Tayuman cor. T. Mapua St., Sta Cruz, Manila
26. Circumferential Road, Porac, Pampanga
27. Sampaloc Rd. cor. Manila East Road, Tanay, Rizal
28. Brgy. Tumaway, Talisay, Batangas
29. Area A. Camarin Rd., Caloocan City
30. Bo. Muzon, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan
31. Dagat-Dagatan Ave. cor. Langaray St. Caloocan City
32. #8 Ellsco Rd., Kalawaan, Pasig City
33. Lingsat, San Fernando, La Union
34. Bo. Sampaloc-Marcos H-way, Tanay, Rizal
35. #304 Shaw Blvd Cor. L. Mencias St., Mandaluyong
36. Maharlika Highway Brgy Baloc, Sto Domingo, NE
37. Bo. Mayamot, Antipolo City
38. Brgy. Salacot & Cambio, San Miguel, Bulacan
39. Brgy. III Norte, San Juan, La Union
40. Brgy. Amaya I, Tanza, Cavite
41. Lumang Calzada, Calaca, Batangas
42. Oliveros St., Sumulong H-way, Brgy. Mayamot, Antipolo City
43. Don Mariano Marcos Ave., North Fairview, Q.C.
44. Ortigas Extension, Cainta, Rizal
45. New York and Cambridge Sts., Cubao, Q.C.
46. Sumulong, Marcos H-way, Antipolo, Rizal
47. Brgy. Bita, Sison, Pangasinan
48. Brgy. San Juan, Solsona, Ilocos Norte
49. Brgy. Tambo, Lipa, Batangas
50. Nat'l. H-way, Binalonan, Pangasinan
51. Kingfisher cor. Quirino Ave. Quirino Highway, Novaliches, Q.C.
52. Naguillian, Pangasinan
53. Brgy. Talipapa, Mindanao Avenue Quezon City
54. Brgy. Tambo, Quirino Ave. Paranaque, Metro Manila
55. Brgy. Calaocan, Bambang, Nueva Viscaya
56. Brgy. Bambang, Bacnotan, La Union
57. Brgy. Gilit, San Jose Patag, Sta Maria, Bulacan
58. Pob. San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
59. V. Luna Compound, V. Luna Ave., Q.C.
60. A. Panganiban St., Cebu City

FV GAZETERIAS

61. Manghinao Proper Bauan, Batangas
62. Bo. Molino, Bacoor, Cavite
63. # 26 JP Rizal St., Bo. Balite, Montalban, Rizal
64. Nat'l H-way, Bo. Nueva, San Pedro, Laguna

Soon to Operate:

1. Barangka, Marikina
2. Commonwealth Avenue, Q.C.
3. Calamba, Laguna
4. Santolan, San Juan, M.M.
5. Gapan, Nueva Ecija

Soon to Serve:

1. Kalentong, San Juan, M.M.
2. Buting, Pasig
3. Gagalangin, Tondo
4. Malinta Service Road
5. Valenzuela Interchange
6. Brgy. Inarawan, Cogeo, Antipolo City
7. Cogeo, Antipolo City
8. Antipolo (town proper)
9. Bacarra, Ilocos Norte
10. Botolan, Zambales
11. San Narciso, Zambales
12. Subic
13. Clark

- and a total of 135 Stations by 2003!

Ever higher, on wings of resilience, powered by growth, borne on winds of change over a challenging landscape.

In the fourth year after enactment of the Oil Deregulation bill (RA8479) into law, Flying V is proud to be a part of healthy competition within the oil industry, thus benefiting the consumers and the public. Flying V is committed as ever to provide the market with competitively priced alternatives for fuels and lubricants to energize the transport industry.

In response to the call of Jaime Cardinal Sin and the government for true people power, Flying V has established a parallel program of human resource development that fosters positive values and improved self-esteem.

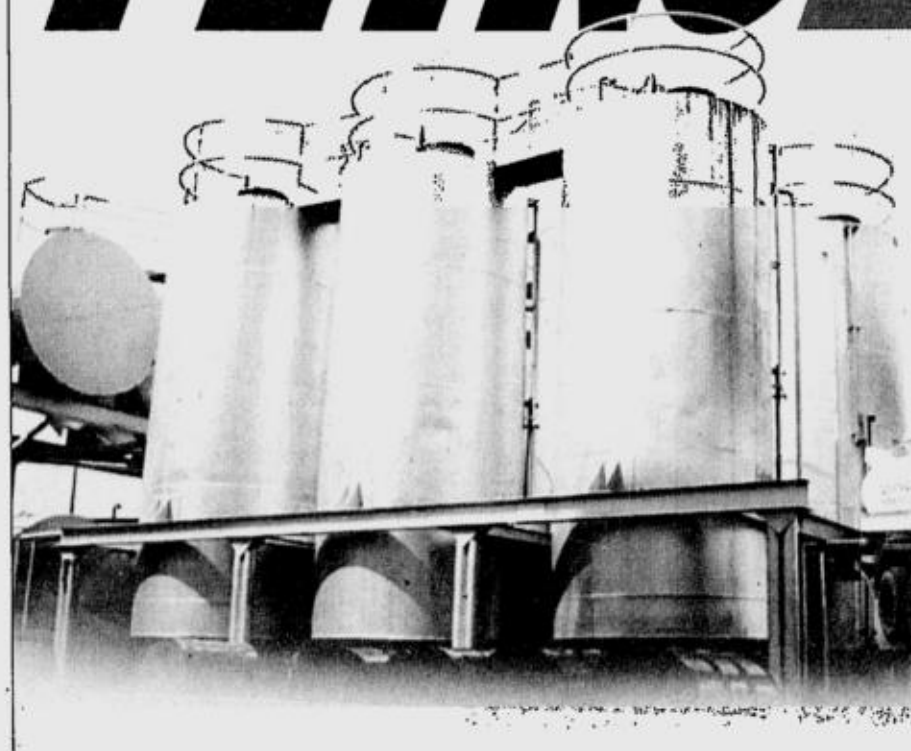
In coordination with Academe Foundation and Erdatech Foundation, the group has already graduated its first set of motivated, trained personnel who will professionalize the jobs of forecourt attendants and cashiers. This year-round program is designed to meet Flying V station personnel needs and that of **other oil companies**.

Flying V salutes our government for enacting the Oil Deregulation Law and supporting the oil industry new players' effort at healthy competition that redounds to the consumers' benefit.

Join the growing powerhouse team!
If you're interested, let's talk business-
call Jing R. Raymundo
Tel. 4487069 • Cell: (0917) 5165239 • E-mail: FlyingV@philworld.net

FLYING V
Soaring High by Serving You.

PETROLINE



Keeps the petroleum storage and supply logistics chain unbroken for New Players wanting to enter the Visayas / Mindanao market.

Market expansion in the vital Southern Philippines requires quality storage facilities in the major ports of the key islands. PETROLINE has such storage tank depots in Cebu, Iloilo, Davao, and very soon, Gen. Santos, with present combined capacity of some 250,000 bbls. PETROLINE can also provide a supply of needed fuels as well, and can utilize its transport resources on land and sea to reach your market destinations.

Keep PETROLINE in mind for petroleum supply and storage capabilities in the Vis-Min market.

For inquiries please contact:
Ms. Gladys Y. Diamante
PETROLINE
9/F, Columbia Tower
Ortigas Ave., Mandaluyong City
Tels.: 7275705 Fax: 7233379
Cel.: 09178138819

NPPAP: Working

OIL DEREGULATION PUMP PRIMING THE ECONOMY

The **New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines** celebrates 4 years of **Oil Deregulation** in the country as mandated under **Republic Act 8479**, otherwise known as the *"Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation of 1998"*. While signing of the Act was made on February 8, 1998, today marks the signing of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) which made the law effective.

In the span of 4 years, the New Industry Players have already managed to corner an estimated 12% of the total market of petroleum products as against the 10% in the previous year or a two (2) percent growth for one year. This achievement is even better than the Thailand model where the market share of the new petroleum players grew at a slower phase.

Oil Deregulation which generated new investments from both international and domestic sources thus help in pump priming the economy, providing the best quality petroleum products and services at competitive prices to the point of need, even to the farthest corner of the archipelago. Things are getting better and better each year for the **New Players**, and this also holds true to various industries, volume users, and the general public as well.

Mushrooming Entrepreneurs

Through its retail outlets sprouting everywhere at a faster rate, the **New Players** became more accessible even to the remote communities in the country. This ensures that there is a good representation of all the players around the archipelago. In the past year alone, the number of retail outlets has grown from 276 to 364, and by the end of 2002, these number of stations are projected to grow by 500 stations or by 30% in number.

Competitive Pricing

The multiplication of retail outlets throughout the country entails healthy competition in all sectors. And with more competition, both big players and new players will improve their services and quality of products. In the process, it is the consumer who ultimately reaps the fruits of Deregulation.

According to the comparative study on non-pricing aspects done by the Department of Energy, in terms of product quality the deregulated had more product grades with performance additives, and its service had much improved.

Bright Economic Future

Truly deregulation is alive! And with its effects being prominently visible, rest assured that the **New Players** will be there hand in hand with the government to pump new strength to our economy.

NPPAP's Fellowship of officers. *Standing from left: **Glenn Yu** (Chief Operating Officer of Seaoil), **Atty. Danny Guttierrez** (Manager-Legal and Admin of PTT Phils., Inc.), **Lino Ceriola** (Chairman and CEO of Petrolino), **Richard R. Reyes** (Marketing Director of SBDI), **Dipankar Pal** (President of Liquigaz), **Oscar P. Senar** (Consultant/Adviser of Liquigaz), **Gerardo Quisumbing** (Special Assistant to the Chairman of Pryce Gases, Inc.). Seated from left are: **Thawansak Krapong** (Chief Operating Officer of PTT Phils. Inc.), **Siripong Phoungpaka** (President of SBDI), **Fernando L. Martinez** (Chairman and CEO of Eastern Petroleum Corp.), and **Ramon F. Villavicencio** (Financial Consultant of Flying V)*

NEW PETROLEUM PLAYERS

Officers and Board of Directors

FERNANDO L. MARTINEZ
(EASTERN PETROLEUM CORPORATION)
President

GLENN YU
(SEAOIL)
Vice President

GERALD L. LIM
(RAMBI DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION)
Secretary

MARY ANN VILLAVICENCIO-SY
(TWA-FILPRIDE ENERGY CORPORATION)
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(PRYCE GASES INC.)
Director

LINO CERIOLA
(3N2J SHIPPING & TRADING SERVICES, INC.)
Director

DAVID CO
(UNIOIL PETROLEUM PHILS., INC.)
Director

RICHARD R. REYES
(SUBIC BAY DISTRIBUTION,INC.)
Director

Castrol

Castrol is one of the world's leading manufacturers of automotive lubricants. C.C. Wakefield founded **Castrol** in 1899. Since then, **Castrol** has always been recognized as a company that provides high-quality and technologically advanced products. Continuous research and development have garnered **Castrol** the unparalleled reputation for innovation and quality. From the earliest days, **Castrol** has built its business to provide **High Performance, Premium Quality and Technology Led** products and services. In 2000, British Petroleum (BP), one of the largest petroleum companies in the world acquired **Castrol**.

Endurance, efficiency, and high performance are the standards required by **Castrol** and its partners. In the Philippine market, **Castrol's** Family of Products offers the highest protection of components, combined with control over operating and maintenance cost. Countless hours of research assure customers the most superior products available.

Meeting the needs of the customer is the foremost in **Castrol's** endeavors. In the field of customer service, **Castrol** leads the way with its Total Care Management System that aim to provide superior products combined with the highest level of personal service.

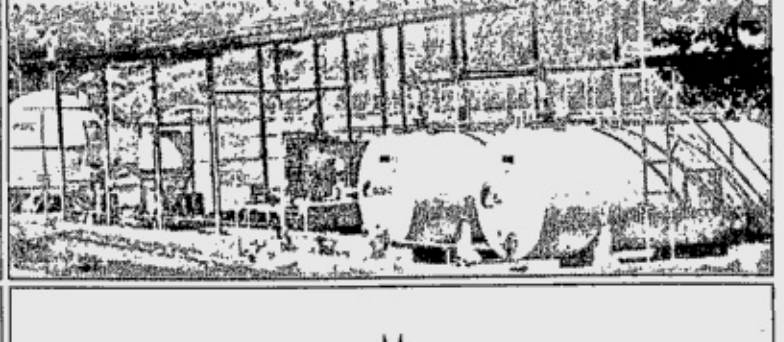
elpaso

SUBIC BAY DISTRIBUTION, INC.

El Paso Energy Corporation recently completed its merger with **The Coastal Corporation (Coastal)** last January 29, 2001. With the total enterprise value of over US$50 billion, the entity is now the fourth largest U.S. energy company. The combination of assets, intellectual capital, and financial resources created the largest and most broadly based natural gas company in the world.

El Paso had a joint venture with the Petroleum Authority of Thailand (PTT) which produced Subic Bay Distribution, Inc. (SBDI). SBDI is tasked to sell petroleum products into the Philippines domestic market and has recently leased the storage facilities in Subic and Clark Air base with a combined ullage of 3 Million barrels for 25 years and is renewable for another 25. The **El Paso-Coastal** group through SBDI plans to expand its operations by developing storage/depot facilities in various regions of the country in the next few years. These facilities will compliment the company's plan to set up retail outlets around the country.

El Paso-Coastal's future plans for the Philippines include the establishment of a petroleum distribution system to supply service stations throughout the country, and a construction ownership and operation of electrical power plants. **El Paso-Coastal** is confident that the Philippines' recent economic growth will continue and has taken the necessary steps to fuel the economic growth through substantial investment.



PETROLINO

3N2J SHIPPING & TRADING SERVICES, INC.

Petrolino is a registered brand name of petroleum products supplied and distributed by **3N2J Shipping and Trading Services, Inc.,** which is engaged in the bulk supply of fuel products and large industrial consumers. The company also provides bunkering services to both domestic and foreign vessels in Manila and nearby ports.

The company has a five-year distributor agreement with Subic Bay Distribution Inc., which allows for withdrawal of about 8 million liters of petroleum products with the term of 30 days and hefty discounts. In terms of marketing and distribution imperatives, the corporation has engaged into contract with several bulk and industry buyers, bulk distributors, as well as in the transshipment and storage of petroleum products.

Presently, **Petrolino** has transshipment, transportation, storage facilities and marketing networks in Subic Bay, Metro Manila, Batangas City, Legaspi City, Bacolod City and Cebu City. There are also distribution networks and marketing structures organized in Mindanao, particularly in the cities of Cagayan De Oro, General Santos, Iligan and Davao. These new structures will evolve into a stronger distribution hubs to support networks of bulk distribution systems and clusters of gasoline stations that will bring competitively priced petroleum products even to the remote islands and barangays of our country.

PRYCE GASES, INC.

PRYCE GASES INC. was founded in 1988 as manufacturer and distributor of industrial and medical gases. In late 1996 it expanded its business by becoming an importer and distributor of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) under the trade name **"PRYCEGAS"**. Presently, the company operates extensively in the Visayas and Mindanao areas although it has a small LPG refilling plant operation in Pampanga.

To show its commitment as a new player in the downstream LPG business, **PGI** constructed sixteen LPG storage plants within a period of four years from late 1997 to 2001. These new LPG facilities have a combined storage capacity of **eight thousand six hundred metric tons**. Seven of these are marine-fed import bulk terminals and nine are lorry-fed refilling plants. Of the seven import terminals, four are located in the Visayas and three in Mindanao. Of the nine lorry-fed refilling plants, one is in Central Luzon, three in Mindanao, and five in Visayas.

By strategically building an extensive supply infrastructure and distribution network in the Visayas and Mindanao, **PGI** hopes to take full advantage of the growing LPG and industrial gas market in the area. With its huge investments on plant facilities, the company has demonstrated its deep commitment to better serve the needs of its various customers and become a major partner in the economic development of the Southern Philippines region.

PTT Philippines, Inc.

Committed to provide better quality, price and services to Filipino consumers.

for the Filipino.

New Players	No. of stations
Flying V	63
SeaOil	53
Eastern	24
Unioil	22
PTT	13
Others	236
Total	411

More and more New Players in the scene.

The number of players have greatly increased after RA 8479. As of December of 2001, there are already 41 players in Fuel Bulk Marketing, 100 in Retail Marketing, 14 in LPG Marketing, 7 in Storage, 3 in Re-processing, and 16 in Bunkering. All in all we have a hundred and eighty one (181) New Players in operation.

With this development, the investments of the New Players has grown with P8.16 Billion on Fuel Bulk Marketing, P1.46 Billion on Retail Marketing, P4.85 Billion on LPG Marketing, P.44 Billion on Storage, and P.17 Billion on Bunkering, with the grand total of 15.07 Billion Pesos.

Truly Oil Deregulation is providing the Filipino with more choices, better services, and competitive pricing, and with an environment like this, the country's economy is bound to flourish.

Energy Secretary Vince Perez and O.I.C. Director Zenaida Monsada of the Energy Industry Administration Bureau poses with members of the Petroleum Dealers Association in a symposium on downstream oil industry deregulation.

MESSAGES

I am pleased to note the New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines (NPPAP), one of the most dynamic and promising organizations in the energy sector today, is spearheading the 4th Anniversary celebration of the effectivity of the "Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998" (R.A. No. 8479).

I consider this gesture a show of your appreciation of this legislative enactment and recognize your efforts as an indication of your continued support to the policy of the state to uphold the liberalization and deregulation of downstream oil industry in an atmosphere of a truly competitive market.

Much as this law is regarded as an improvement of the "Downstream Oil Deregulation Act of 1996" (R.A. No. 8180), rest assured that we in the Senate shall be open to proposals for legislative reforms, whenever necessary, to enable our downstream oil industry be ever attuned to the relevant requirements of national development.

I look forward to more productive and meaningful avenues of cooperation with your organization as we move towards our common aspiration for a more globally competitive and progressive Philippine economy.

With best wishes for your success in your future endeavors.

RENATO L. CAYETANO
Chairman
Committee on Energy
Senate

Today we mark the **4th Anniversary of Republic Act 8479 or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Law**. Four years since the government finally decided to institute reforms on the downstream petroleum industry.

We also celebrate consumer freedom..... the freedom to choose the best quality and competitively priced petroleum products when and where we want it.

We have again proven to the world that we Filipinos could easily adapt to situations and rise above it with our own innovation as we overtake our Asian neighbors as model for oil deregulation.

Let us take advantage of the benefits the oil deregulation as to offer and continue to exercise our liberty to choose among a wider range of products, services for our greatest convenience and comfort.

I urge the members of the New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines (NPPAP) and the other new players in the industry to continue with their future endeavors and promise that it will continue its role of providing the best quality fuel while promoting a free and market oriented petroleum industry beneficial to all consumers.

More power to the Filipino and Mabuhay!

VINCENT S. PEREZ, JR.
Secretary
Department of Energy

Consistent with the government's over all policy of liberalization, the deregulation of the Downstream Oil Industry in 1998 has proven to be beneficial not only to the industry players but also to the national government and the consumers. The entrance of new players has broken-up the monopoly in the industry previously enjoyed by the three major players.

Under a deregulated environment, the industry players would have to compete aggressively against each other for a share of the refined petroleum products market, and consequently, a fair return on their investments. The government, on the other hand, has relaxed its regulatory function to monitoring of petroleum product prices and the activities of new entrants. And the consumers have more choices in terms of product quality, prices and services.

Although we have not fully enjoyed the benefits of full deregulation, the general public should be able to appreciate that the entry of new industry players resulted to more investments in the industry, more gasoline stations, improved facilities and services, and competitive prices which speak well of the whole concept of deregulation.

On its fourth year of implementation, I congratulate the industry and challenge the new entrants to work more aggressively and bring the level of competition to greater heights. To this end, I urge the DOE to enhance the full implementation of deregulation of the oil industry by putting in place the mechanisms necessary to provide a level playing field and foster competition among the industry players.

More power!

ALIPIO CIRILO V. BADELLES
Chairman
Committee on Energy
House of Representatives

In just Four (4) years, the Downstream Oil Deregulation law has attracted more than 60 new companies which poured in more than P15 Billion in investment reflected in more than 400 new retail stations, Four (4) international oil terminals and thousands of new jobs.

New names were introduced in the local scene even when some of the names are already known in the international market.

Such is the beauty of Deregulation, of opening the market to New Players, giving our countrymen the variety of products and services they richly deserve.

As we enter the 5th Year of Oil Deregulation, members of the New Petroleum Players Association of the Philippines (NPPAP) is entering a new phase of vigilance. Today, we are not just concerned in promoting the merits of deregulation, but in ensuring that all industry players both old and new are playing a level playing field, that they adhere to the quality standards provided for, and the Filipino consumers receive the best value for the Petroleum products that they buy everyday.

On this Anniversary therefore, we reaffirm our commitment to serve and in partnership with **President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's** Administration be a key player in pump priming our economy.

Mabuhay!

FERNANDO L. MARTINEZ
President
New Petroleum Players
Association of the Philippines

ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

EASTERN

The Oil Industry has never been the same again. since the entry of **Eastern Corporation** in December 10, 1996. Exciting things have happened as new doors were opened, and new opportunities came. All these inline with the company's mission of giving the Filipino only the best.

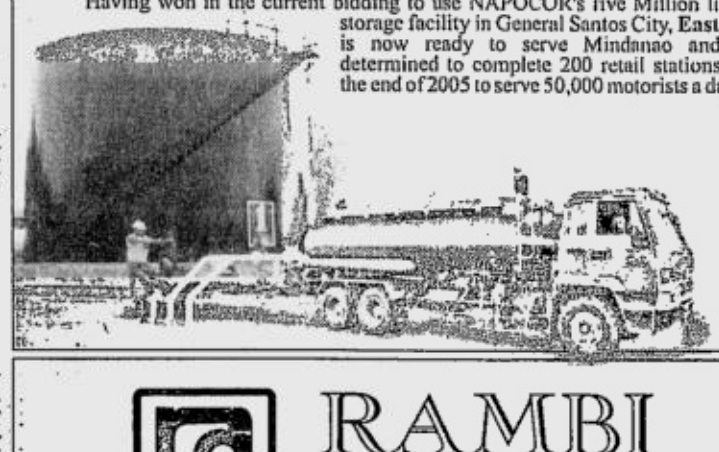
Eastern specializes in the supply and distribution of Bunker Fuel Oil, Automotive Diesel Oil, Unleaded Gasoline, Regular Gasoline, Kerosene and Lubricants which creates a higher economic impact to the country.

Eastern strongly supported the passage of the Clean Air Act for a cleaner Philippines thus, launching INTENSITY, a gasoline that cleans up the engine and decreases fuel consumption.

With its commitment of giving an unparalleled distribution and service, **Eastern** put up its Bulk Plant which has a capacity to unload One Million liters of various products per day. The said bulk plant is equipped with a tank truck loading rack that can load four (4) trucks simultaneously. It has 1,100 GMP Fire and Jockey Pump, a two thousand square meters roadway for easy access of transportation. Eastern also operates its Transport Division that helps deliver products at the right place and at the right time.

Merely five years in the business, **Eastern** started franchising two (2) years ago and has already established a wide dealership network within and outside Metro Manila serving 10,000 customers a day on its 22 retail outlets called **EASTERN GASOLINAHANG BAYAN.**

Having won in the current bidding to use NAPOCOR's five Million liters storage facility in General Santos City, **Eastern** is now ready to serve Mindanao and is determined to complete 200 retail stations by the end of 2005 to serve 50,000 motorists a day.



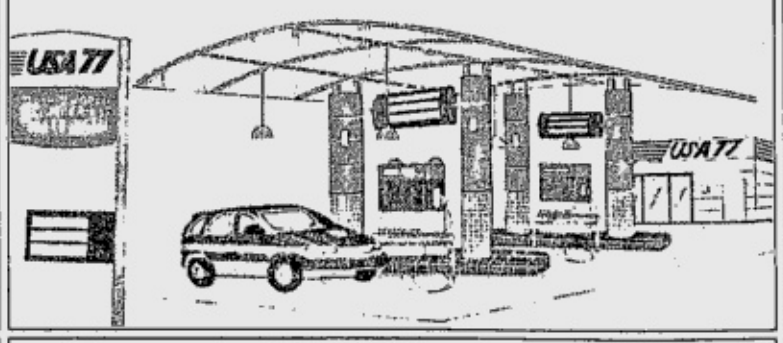
FILPRIDE Energy Corp.

Filpride Resources, Inc. (FRI) was established in may 1985, in its purpose to distribute fuels and lubricants focused on the end users: industrial accounts. In January of 1996, **Filpride Energy Corporation (FEC)** was incorporated to cater to the consumer accounts through the establishment of service station network, complimenting FRI's desire to develop brand awareness.

In 1998, FRI was one of the two successful new suppliers to the National Power Corporation (NPC), and at present, the only Oil Company that has been able to sustain its market presence in the NPC. In 2000, FRI embarked on the expansion of its Manila Terminal in preparation for its eventual entry in the retail market. The expansion project was completed in 2001 with 4 new storage tanks and 2-tank truck loading bays with 10 loading arms. Filpride's goal is to be visible in every town and city of the Philippines to provide the Filipinos better products and services.

In 2002, FEC launched its retail brand: USA 77. It is envisioned that within the year, it is set to ground break the first 12 Company-Owned, Company-Operated retail outlets, all strategically located within the areas of Metro Manila, Central and Southern Luzon.

With 17 years of petroleum experience, it is undeniable that "Filpride" has the energy and the resources to attain what it takes to make the Filipino Entrepreneur succeed.



LIQUIGAZ PHILIPPINES CORPORATION

Liquigaz Philippines Corporation is the largest independent supplier and distributor of Liquified Petroleum Gas for industrial, commercial, and domestic use. It is wholly owned by SHV Gas of the Netherlands, which is the largest LPG marketer in the world with an annual volume in excess of 7 million tons per annum operating in 25 countries worldwide.

Liquigaz is capable of rendering terminalling services for the importation of LPG since 1996. It is also supplying bulk LPG to independent refills. To further improve market share, the company is involved with the marketing of LPG cylinders under the **Liquigaz** brand and the supply of LPG to both commercial and industrial customers.

Liquigaz boasts its Bataan Terminal, which has one of the largest LPG container tanks ever produced in the world. The LPG tanks which are mounded for safety and environmental reasons, are the only one of its type in the country.

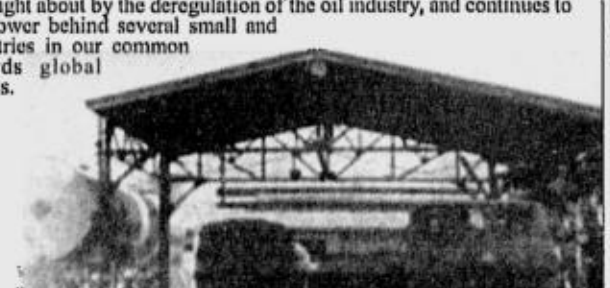
Presently, **Liquigaz** is already considered the latest addition to the LPG big league of Shell, Caltex, and Petron. Today, industry figures show **Liquigaz** cornering a respectable 12% market share.

RAMBI DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

RAMBI DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION began as a trading firm, and was incorporated on August 23, 1973 under the name of "R & A Marketing Business, Incorporated". **RAMBI**'s original product offerings included Oxidized Asphalts, Process Oils, and Special Blends. Later on, they added fuels and various industrial solvents used in coconut oil processing and as raw materials for industrial chemicals. The solvent line then became the Company's main income provider, contributing substantially to **RAMBI**'s growth and expansion. In 1981, due to the decline in sales of industrial solvents to the coconut oil industry, which was then controlled by the Cojuanco Group, **RAMBI** decided to go into the treatment of Bunker Fuel Oil.

Currently, **RAMBI** continues to supply a variety of industries with superior quality **RAMBI FUEL** and **DIESEL OIL**, and other fuel products. **RAMBI** also provides after-sales services such as computerized boiler testing, professional technical assistance, and other equipment and facility maintenance assistance.

With the vision of being recognized by industrial companies as the best service-oriented marketer, distributor and provider of quality petroleum products and allied services in the Philippines, **RAMBI** has embarked on setting up retail outlets in previously unserved areas, and has started to expand its service horizon to cover Central and Southern Luzon, and soon, the Visayas and Mindanao areas. Now on its 29th year of continued operations, **RAMBI** has embraced the new dynamism brought about by the deregulation of the oil industry, and continues to serve as the power behind several small and medium industries in our common march towards global competitiveness.



SEAOIL

SEAOIL emerged in the seventies during one of the worst oil crises in history, during that time the country needed an alternative source of fuel, a need that **SEAOIL** had been instrumental in filling.

With the deregulation of the oil industry in the country, **SEAOIL** rose to the challenge of offering its products and services to the growing demands of the consumers.

SEAOIL is abreast with advanced technologies and techniques to boost up a more efficient and cleaner oil industry. Even before the implementation of the Clean Air Act, **SEAOIL** had already introduced the generation five or G-5 additive in its products to provide consumers with a self-cleaning and car-friendly gasoline and diesel.

The mission to provide total customer satisfaction via the best possible products of our time fuels **SEAOIL** all the more to widen its influence in the oil industry. In the year 2000, a record-breaking network expansion rate has resulted to a total of 60 **SEAOIL** stations nationwide; 20 in Metro Manila and 40 in different regions. **SEAOIL** continues to recognize franchising as vital to the economic growth and to the fulfillment of its role as a leading participant in the country's march to progress and prosperity.

Unioil

Unioil has led the way in innovative petroleum solutions for 36 years now. Since its beginnings in 1966 when it established its blending facility that continues to engage in the production and distribution of lubricants and specialty oil products.

With the deregulation of the local oil industry in 1997, **Unioil** prepared to take market share within the local petroleum market. **Unioil** now also markets various fuels such as diesel, gasoline, base oil, distillates and other base oil related products. The new deregulated oil market has also paved **Unioil**'s successful entry into the service station business. To date, the successful franchising of its service station business has increased to 25 service stations across Luzon. Currently, the company supplies aviation, commercial and industrial fuels, base stock and other lubricant bulk requirements of various industries.

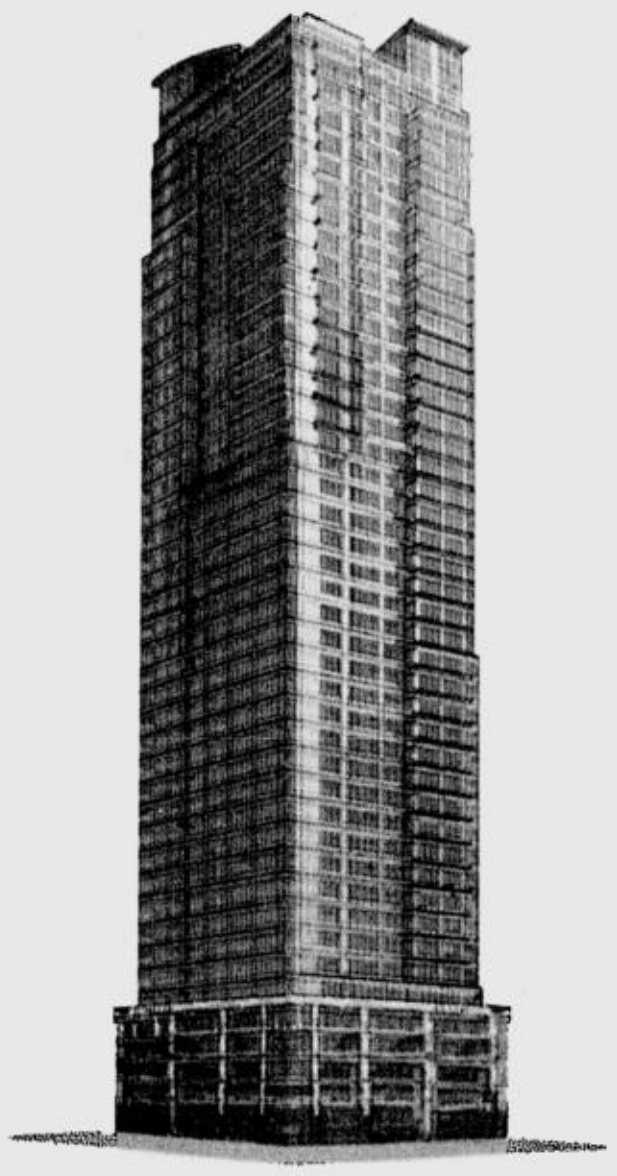
Unioil has concluded a License Agreement with SAP Aktiengesellchaft to use the latest SAP R/3 software, signaling **Unioil**'s commitment to utilize the latest information technology in developing the most modern and efficient internal and external systems to assist its operations and exceed the expectations of its customers. Also, the company's manufacturing plant has been awarded ISO 9002 Certification.

Currently, **Unioil**'s diversified interests include the operation of retail gas services stations; the blending, filling, and marketing of lubricants; oil trading and terminalling, making it the total leading local independent petroleum company in the country.

[Xam Lamp by Terzani]

[Valencia Vase by Arcade]

[Philippe Starck chair by Driade/Domani]



[Residence by Ayala Land]

The look. The feel. The space. The comforts. It's the life and style you've always wanted. And, it's coming together in an Ayala condominium called One Legazpi Park.

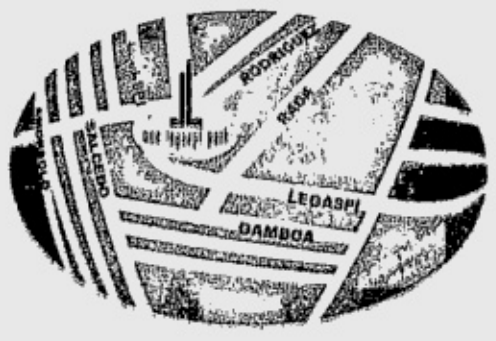
Modern, cosmopolitan. You'll be surprised at how affordable a home can be, right in the midst of Makati.

One Legazpi Park. Your home above it all.

For inquiries please call: 848-5331 / 841-5516 to 19 814-7894.

one legazpi park

AN AYALA LAND RESIDENCE



AYALA LAND, INC.

ENRICHING lives ENHANCING life Model units ready for viewing behind Filipinas Heritage Library along Makati Avenue, Makati City.

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Japan's bankruptcy figures in February hit record high

TOKYO—Corporate bankruptcies in Japan last month rose 18.2 percent from a year ago to 1,712, a post-war high for February, with the world's second largest economy mired in recession, a research firm said Thursday.

"For the month of February, bankruptcies exceeded 1,700 cases for the first time, the second month in a row a post-war record has been set for the given month," Teikoku Data Bank Ltd. said in a statement.

"The trend of increasing bankruptcies in the economic downturn is remarkable," it said.

A total of 1,290 companies, or 75.4 percent of all failures, were the direct result of Japan's deepening recession—the 10th month in a row recession-induced failures have exceeded the three quarters mark.

Total liabilities for February surged 14 percent from a year earlier, to 1.271 trillion yen ($9.85 billion), also a post-war high for the month of February.

In January, the number of Japanese corporate bankruptcies reached 1,620 cases with total liabilities of 1.067 trillion yen.

February's failures represented the 20th worst month overall, while the amount of liabilities was the 25th highest on record.

The total number of bankruptcies for fiscal 2001 also looked set to break the record set in 1984 of 20,363, as the total for the 11 months to February reached 18,264, Teikoku said.

The total liabilities of bankrupt firms however, which reached 14.1 trillion yen in the 11 months to February, was unlikely to break the post-war record set last fiscal year of 26 trillion yen, it said.

West LB Market Research chief economist Andrew Shipley said unpaid debts to banks, which average some 40 percent of a bankrupt firm's outstanding liabilities, would still exceed the average pre-loan-writeoff profitability of Japanese banks for the fiscal year.

"We're still at a rate which surpasses the amount of profits which the banks have been able to generate in recent years," Shipley said.

He said banks have made combined profits of some five trillion yen per year, but bad loans from bankruptcies looked to exceed 6 trillion yen in fiscal 2001, which ends in March.

Shipley said a government fund injection into Japanese banks would be "like pumping air into a tire which has a hole in it," because the lingering recession is keeping the number of bankruptcies high.

"We need an economic recovery or a nominal demand recovery, something that generates demand for capital, before the banks are going to be restored to health," he said. ***AFP***

Airlines pay for shift in power with insurers following Sept. 11

LONDON—A brief exchange at an airline industry conference this week summed up the decisive shift in the balance of power between insurers and airlines that has taken place since the attacks on Sept. 11.

Dennis Mahoney, chair of insurance broker Aon's operations outside the United States, said insurance investors would no longer tolerate "pathetic returns on equity" of around 2 percent and would demand they hike rates to boost profits.

Peter Morris, chief economist at the International Air Transport Association (Iata), countered by saying "airlines would be happy to make 2 percent."

The simple fact is that airlines need insurers today more than insurers need them.

Airlines and insurers' fortunes have mirrored each other over the past decade. Years of ruthless competition fuelled by excess capacity and over-optimistic forecasts caused both industries to make meager returns. Both are now fighting for their survival after the huge financial impact of Sept. 11.

After years of selling cover to airlines at a fraction of the price really required, insurers now have the opportunity to recoup as much as $8 billion they have lost from underwriting airlines in the past decade by pushing up premiums.

Airlines will resist paying these for as long as possible. Those with the protection of government indemnities for their third party terror liability risks are lobbying them hard to extend them beyond their end-of-March deadlines.

Some, like the United States, are likely to do so, but others, like Britain and Germany, have indicated they are disinclined to extend their guarantees.

Without alternative cover from insurers, airlines face having to ground their planes.

Airlines who renewed their basic insurance policies after Sept. 11—which cover their hull and other liability risks—saw price rises of as much as 100 percent.

But by far the most painful cost has been the $1.25 surcharge for every passenger imposed after insurers canceled their existing cover for third party terror liability risks after Sept. 11.

Airlines say the charge is far too high considering the limited cover it offers—only $50 million—and is financially crucifying them.

"We are in a fight for our survival and the insurance industry is not helping in that," said Chris Duncan, chief risk officer at Delta Airlines.

Insurance brokers acting on behalf of airlines have called on London aviation insurers to suspend temporarily the $1.25 surcharge and enter negotiations to reduce it over the long-term to 50 cents or even 25 cents per passenger.

But insurers have refused to consider lowering the surcharge. Airlines can take it off the ticket price to reduce travelers' anger, but they will simply have to be pay it some other way, Peter Butler, underwriting executive at Global Aerospace Underwriting Managers Ltd., told Reuters.

American International Group chair Maurice Greenberg dismissed complaints, likening the surcharge to adding the cost of a Coca-Cola onto the price of an airline ticket.

But large airlines say the burden can be immense.

Bayer plans to divest insecticides arm, says it is no longer part of core business

LEVERKUSEN—In a move to further streamline its portfolio, Bayer AG plans to divest its household insecticides business unit, which is part of the consumer care business group. Comprising mainly the successful Baygon insecticide and Autan repellent brands, the business has annual sales of some 400 million euro, making it the global No. 2 in its market segment.

In addition to the trademark rights, the production facilities and sales offices will also be sold. The active ingredient business, however, will remain with the Bayer Group.

"In our health care business area, we now want to concentrate even more on our core competencies, which are researching, manufacturing and globally marketing human and animal health care products, as well as diagnostic systems," explained Bayer CEO Dr. Manfred Schneider.

"Our world-renowned Baygon and Autan are no longer a good fit in this environment. They would have better growth prospects with a company specialized in such products."

The business unit's principal markets are in Asia and Latin America, while in the crucial North American and European markets it lacks the critical mass to capture market share from its much larger competitors.

Bayer would need to invest heavily to continue growing this business, and such investment is not planned in view of the focus on other major areas in the future portfolio of Bayer HealthCare AG.

To a suitable purchaser, however, the business offers significant potential for expansion, especially at the regional level.

Bayer aims to complete the sale by the end of 2002.

Shareholder Banc of America opposes planned merger between HP, Compaq

SAN FRANCISCO—The investment banking arm of Banc of America, one of the biggest single shareholders in Hewlett Packard, said it would vote against the company's planned merger with Compaq Computer Corp.

Banc of America Capital Management will be voting its 6 million HP shares against the deal, and will send a memo explaining its decision to its investment advisers, who will then pass on that information to the bank's clients, BOA spokesperson Joseph Fazzino said.

Fazzino said the bank would refrain from advising its clients how to vote any shares they own in either company.

BOA holds a further 54 million shares in HP, but those votes are controlled by its investors.

"We feel that ultimately (the merger) is not in the best interests of shareholders," Fazzino said. The spokesperson said BOA was concerned that the merger with Texas-based computer maker Compaq would increase HP's exposure to the sagging computer market.

"We feel that is going to be a soft market for them," Fazzino said.

The rejection is a further blow for the management of HP and Compaq, who have spent the last few months trying to convince shareholders of the merits of the deal.

The founding families of HP, who control 18 percent of the company, have rejected the merger proposal and a number of other shareholders, including California pension fund Calpers and Wells Fargo Bank, have also said they will vote against the acquisition.

HP shareholders are due to vote on the deal on March 19, while Compaq will hold its ballot the following day.

According to analysts, the vote is too hard to call.

So far, sector watchers say, roughly 21 percent of HP shares have been pledged against the deal, while shareholders controlling about 9 percent of the company have either publicly or privately backed it.

HP needs the support of around two-thirds of its institutional investors to complete the deal. An influential adviser in that field, Institutional Shareholder Services, recommended on March 5 that institutions vote their shares in favor of the deal. ***AFP***

An Appeal to
Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

NOT TO RE-APPOINT
MR. PANTALEON D. ALVAREZ
DOTC SECRETARY BECAUSE
HE IS MORALLY UNFIT
TO BE A MEMBER OF YOUR CABINET.

We believe Mr. Alvarez is not compatible with the high standard of morality you have installed in your government - marked by truth telling, respect for the Constitution, unassailable integrity and empowering honesty.

Madame President, we believe the following reasons are compelling enough for you to replace Mr. Alvarez, but we are ready to provide you with more information already in our possession and continue our campaign for the truth.

1. **We believe Mr. Alvarez's career has been marred with his propensity for deception.**

   • He misled you, Madame President, no less than five times about a provision in the PIATCO contract which inhibits the development of DMIA. Now he seeks to remove such provision he earlier denied.

   • He concealed the fact that Jeffrey Cheng of PIATCO stood as the godfather of his daughter in January 1996, a year before PIATCO was given the award for Terminal III. At that time Alvarez was the senior assistant general manager of MIAA.

   • He hoodwinked the public by calling the PIATCO contract "the best BOT deal the government ever had," when in reality the contract is full of provisions making your government the big loser.

   • He lied about his Statements of Assets and Liabilities by failing to disclose his other properties and sources of funds.

   • He conveniently "forgot" that he was Chairman of the MIAA Terminal III Philippine Bids and Awards Committee when he was asked about it by the Commission on Appointments.

   • He pretended not to know the details of the PIATCO contract at the CA, although he was a member of NAIA-MIAA management when the award was made.

2. **We believe he betrayed the Filipino people.**

   • He stubbornly defended and implemented the PIATCO contract, which is grossly disadvantageous to the government, taxpayers, more than 10,000 workers, Filipino travelers and the people from Central Luzon.

   • He has a case with the Ombudsman for overpricing on his contract with the government by P76 million.

3. **We believe his word cannot be trusted.**

   • You cannot trust his word, Madame President. As we stated earlier, you cannot get the real score about DMIA. And so you are facing a great multitude of disgruntled provincemates.

   • He is now making empty promises to the labor sector and your provincemates in Pampanga just so they will support his confirmation, notwithstanding the fact that, for the longest time, he did not even help them.

4. **We believe he is bereft of delicadeza.**

   • As congressman and Chairman of the House Committee on Transportation, which investigated the PIATCO contract, his company — Wintrack Builders — benefited from a P300 million contract with PIATCO.

Madame President, there are many more qualified candidates for the position of DOTC Secretary characterized by integrity, honesty and competence.

Listen to your people through their representatives in the Commission on Appointments who have by-passed him three times.

Listen to the good counsel of your Advisers and the other members of the Cabinet.

Ed Oredina
Chairman, Mobilization Committee
PAL Employees Association

Antonio V. Policarpio
Vice President
National Labor Union

Demosthenes Agan, Jr.
President
MIASCOR Workers Union

Perfecto R. Yasay, Jr.
Chairman
MASO

Fred Mangliman
Attorney-In-Fact of more than 300 filers of a class suit against PIATCO

Benjamin P. Esteban
President (ACUPA)
Angeles Urban Poor

Filomeno S. Salenga
President
PASADA (Angeles)

Susan Pineda
Founder
Ing Makabubaing Aksyon (IMA)

Angel Bautista
President
MABA (Bankers' Assn.)

Myrna P. Sarmiento
President, Pampanga
Electric Coop (PELCO II)

Nieda S. Yamzon
KKKA (Angeles)

Rosemarie Herrera
Executive Director
PAMPANGO

Edwin Beltran
Administrative Officer
Social Action Center (SACOP)

Itang Pineda
Kilusan para sa Kagalingan ng Kababaihan (KKKA)

Nenita Gregorio-Sta. Ines
Executive Director
Health Integrated Dev't (HIDS)

Esteban Masagca
Executive Director
PDRN (Disaster Response)

Eugene Orejas
Project Officer
CONCERN (CL)

Jeff Adriano
ICAPEZO

Olga M. Tua
Secretary General
NUTRILINC

Virgilio de Guzman
SALBA (Bataan)

Noel S. Gloria
SKB (Bataan)

Isabel L. Boma
PNRC (Red Cross)

Connie Baltazar
PELCO II

Jess B. David
Consumer Protection (CLACPI)

Maria D. Liong
KKKA (Angeles)

May D. Liong
KKKA (Angeles)

Nina Saplala
CLACPI/(SLF)

Ghuy Carlatta
KKKA (Angeles)

Percy Angosta
KKKA (Angeles)

Lalaine Bacani
PELCO II

Leny Beltran
PELCO II

Fe Macayanan
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		FOREHIND QUARTER	VAT EXEMPT P109 per kilo

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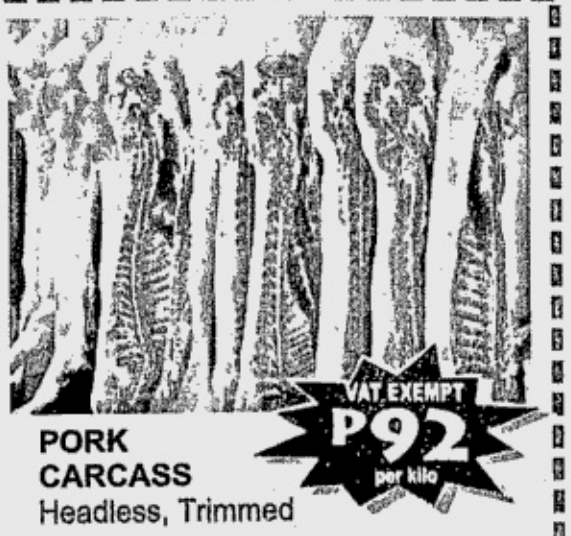
Skin On, Boneless



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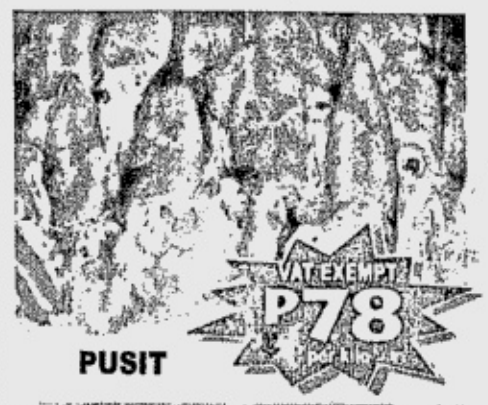

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300 mL. x 12
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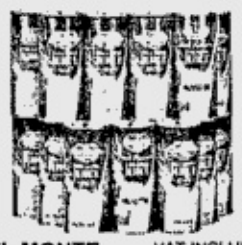

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P57 per piece

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155 G. x 10's
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P7.30 per can

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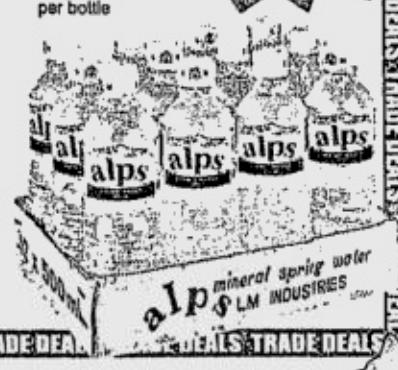

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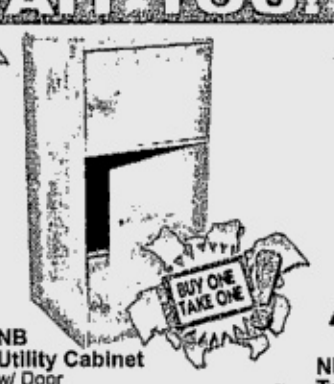

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w/ Door
Beech Color, 3 Layers
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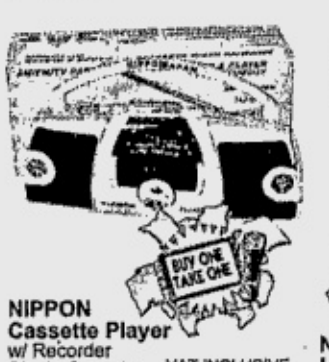

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BUSINESS*Friday*

Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

FAB FIVE'S FRANCHISE ONE

Ex-officials team up for new ballgame

By Clarissa S. Batino

IF you put together three former government officials with high profile businesses, an owner of a big broadcasting company and a scion of one of the country's richest families, you expect nothing less than a brilliant venture.

And Franchise One Corporation, a subsidiary of Philippine Multi-Media Systems Inc., will surely not disappoint.

Integrating the resources and ingenuity of five of the country's big names in business, the company is 40 percent owned by Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco, former chair of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

The former telecommunications king is joined by former Finance Secretary Jose Pardo, former BIR Commissioner Dakila Fonacier, former National Development Corp. general manager Samie Lim, and broadcasting executive now a director of San Miguel Corp. Menardo Jimenez.

Pardo's family owns the master franchise of Wendy's and part of 7-Eleven, Fonacier owns the Odyssey Music Group, Lim owns the Automatic Center, Blim's Furniture and Sogo, while Jimenez owns part of GMA-7.

Franchise One is the exclusive distributor of the Dream Plazas, an offshoot of Philippine Multi-Media System Inc. - an earlier venture formed by the fab five.

LIM

PARDO

FONACIER

JIMENEZ

COJUANGCO

Philippine Multi-Media is a P1-billion company that offers the most advanced technology in digital broadcasting through Dream Broadcasting System.

Using the satellite technology of Dream Broadcasting, Franchise One will develop mini malls in the provinces that would house a small theater, Internet café, drugstore, snack bars and possibly even a sports complex offering billiards, swimming and basketball.

"Dream Plaza is envisioned to be a mini mall for the masses. It will be built in areas where mall giants like SM and Robinson's would choose not to go," said Pardo.

The idea, added the former finance chief, was to develop a one-stop complex in the provinces that could provide entertainment like the movies and the Internet as well as a place to buy basic goods like medicine.

"We would like to transform idle lands into bustling entertainment and business districts. From there, we want to create economic activity that should help lift the lives of the people who live in the community," added Fonacier, the president and chief executive officer of the company.

Fonacier said Franchise One has started to put up and will complete in the next three months a Dream Plaza in Antipolo, Bulacan, Mountain Province, Surigao and Tarlac.

The main feature of the mini malls, said Fonacier, would be the Dream Theater that would have 100 seats and would use the satellite technology to bring the latest movie titles to the provinces.

Through the tie-up with Mabuhay Satellite Agila III of the PLDT, the satellite technology will allow Franchise One to beam movies to the provinces under any weather conditions.

"We have talked with local movie producers and they like the idea because firstly, they need not produce the reels which cost about P60,000 and then they can show the films to the provinces almost the same time that they are being shown in Manila," said the former BIR chief.

Pardo noted that about 80 percent of the films they would show would be local films, principally from Viva.

Eldon Cruz, son-in-law of former President Cory Aquino, will handle the operations of Dream Theaters, he added.

The theater, said Fonacier, can also be converted into a conference room or a meeting hall during off-film hours.

Fonacier said Franchise One has found about 1,300 potential sites for its Dream Plaza and intends to put up as many as 100 Dream Plazas every year over the next five to six years at a cost of no more than P2.5 million for every mini mall.

To own a Dream Plaza franchise, one must have the land and the capital to put up the mini mall.

"It would be up to Franchise One to fill out the empty space with businesses that we believe would click in a particular area aside from the mainstays which are the theater and the Internet that would both use the satellite technology," said the former BIR chief.

In exchange for the services, Pardo said the mini mall owners would have to pay their group a franchise fee. The target is to earn about P100 million a year, said Fonacier.

In areas where the space may be bigger, Pardo said the mall may be able to accommodate a mini country club with a swimming pool, basketball court, billiard table, among others.

"Franchise One will take care of finding the locators that would offer products best suited by the community where we would operate," said Fonacier.

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Filing of income tax returns by fixed income earners

By: Rubina P. Bundoc-Aquino
Senior Associate, Tax Division
SGV & Co.

TAX-FILES

GENERALLY, an individual earning fixed income receives his paycheck net of withholding tax. This withholding tax represents an advance payment by the employee of the income tax due on his compensation on or before April 15 of the succeeding year. It applies to all employed individuals, whether citizens or foreigners, who receive a fixed income for services rendered in the Philippines.

No distinction is made between classes or grades of employees. Thus, managers and officers are considered employees.

The computation of the withholding tax is dependent on the amount of the individual's taxable income. This refers to his gross compensation income less personal exemptions and the amount of premium payments on his health and/or hospitalization insurance.

In general, the term "compensation" means all remuneration for services performed by an employee for his employer.

This includes salaries, wages, honoraria, allowances, commissions, fees, taxable bonuses and fringe benefits (except those which are subject to the fringe benefits tax), taxable pensions and retirement pay and other income of a similar nature.

However, certain income payments are exempt from withholding taxes. These include:

(1) Payment received as an incident of employment, as follows:

(a) Retirement benefits received under Republic Act under 7641 and those received by officials and employees of private firms, under a reasonable private benefit plan maintained by the employer;

(b) Any amount received by an official or employee or by his heirs from the employer due to death, sickness or other physical disability or for any cause beyond the control of the said official or employee, such as retrenchment, redundancy, or cessation of business;

(c) Social security benefits, retirement gratuities, pensions and other similar benefits received by residents or nonresident citizens of the Philippines or aliens who come to reside permanently in the Philippines from foreign government agencies and other institutions, private or public;

(d) Payments of benefits due or to become due to any person residing in the Philippines under the law of the United States administered by the United States Veterans Administration;

(e) Payments of benefits made under the Social Security System Act of 1954; and

(f) Benefits received from the GSIS Act of 1937, and the retirement gratuity received by government officials and employees.

(2) Remuneration paid for agricultural labor;

(3) Remuneration paid for services of a household nature performed by an employee in or about the private home of the person by whom he is employed. This includes services rendered by cooks, maids, butlers, valets, laundresses, gardeners, drivers of automobiles for family use.

(4) Remuneration for casual labor not in the course of an employer's trade or business. The term "casual labor" includes labor that is occasional, incidental or regular.

(5) Compensation for services by a citizen or resident of the Philippines for a foreign government or an international organization;

(6) Actual, moral, exemplary and nominal damages received by an employee or his heirs pursuant to a final judgment or compromise agreement arising out of or related to an employer-employee relationship;

(7) The proceeds of life insurance policies paid to the heirs or beneficiaries upon the death of the insured, whether in a single sum or otherwise;

(8) The amount received by the insured, as a return of premium or premiums paid by him under life insurance, endowment, or annuity contracts either during the term or at the maturity of the term mentioned in the contract or upon surrender of the contract;

(9) Amounts received, through Accident or Health Insurance or under Workmen's Compensation Acts, as compensation for injuries or sickness plus the amount of any damages received, whether by suit or agreement on account of such injuries or sickness;

(10) Income of any kind required by any treaty obligation binding upon the Government of the Philippines;

(11) The 13th-month pay and other benefits not exceeding P30,000

(12) GSIS, SSS, Medicare and Pag-IBIG contributions, and union dues of individual employees.

Personal and Additional Exemptions. An employee receiving compensation shall be entitled to personal exemptions, which amounts shall be deducted from his gross income to determine the amount of his taxable income. The amounts of the exemptions will depend on the employee's status as single, married or head of the family and the number of dependents qualified for additional exemptions.

A single individual or a married individual judicially decreed as legally separated with no qualified dependents shall be entitled to a personal exemption of P20,000.

On the other hand, each legally married employee is entitled to a personal exemption of P32,000. However, a married individual deriving income within the Philippines whose spouse is unemployed or is a non-resident citizen deriving income from foreign sources, shall be entitled to a personal exemption of only P32,000.

A head of a family is entitled to a personal exemption of P25,000. Additionally, a married individual or a head of family shall be allowed an exemption of P8,000 for a maximum of four children.

This additional exemption shall, in the case of married individuals, be claimed by only one of the spouses.

As a rule, the husband shall be the proper claimant of the additional exemption for qualified dependent children unless he explicitly waives his right in favor of his wife in the application for registration or in the withholding exemption certificate.

A dependent means a legitimate, illegitimate or legally adopted child up to 21 years of age, unmarried and not gainfully employed or if such dependent, regardless of age, is incapable of self-support because of mental or physical defect.

In the case of an individual whose total compensation income does not exceed the minimum wage P5,000 monthly or P60,000 a year, whichever is higher, no withholding of tax shall be required.

The employer shall determine the total taxable compensation paid to each employee for the entire year, including the last compensation to be paid, and then compute the amount of income tax on said annualized gross compensation income.

Any deficiency tax so computed shall be deducted from the last payment of compensation of the employee. On the other hand, any excess tax withheld shall be returned to the employee not later than Jan. 25 of the following year.

Withholding tax certificate. Every employer or other person required to withhold tax on compensation shall furnish every employee from whose compensation taxes have been withheld the Certificate of Income Tax Withheld on Compensation (Form No. 2316, formerly Form No. W-2) on or before Jan. 31 of the succeeding calendar year, or if employment is terminated before the close of such calendar year, on the day on which the last payment of compensation is made.

Liability for tax. In general, the employer shall be responsible for the withholding and remittance of the correct amount of taxes from the compensation income of his employees. If he fails to withhold and remit the correct amount of tax, such tax shall be collected from him together with the applicable penalties.

Filing of Income Tax Returns by employees receiving purely compensation income. Individual taxpayers receiving purely compensation income from Philippine sources not exceeding an aggregate amount of P60,000 for the calendar year and the income tax on which has been withheld correctly by the employer (tax withheld equals tax due) shall not be required to file an income tax return (ITR).

The following individuals, however, are still required to file their income tax returns:

(A) Individuals deriving compensation concurrently from two or more employers at anytime during the taxable year.

(B) Individuals whose purely compensation income for the taxable year exceeds P60,000.

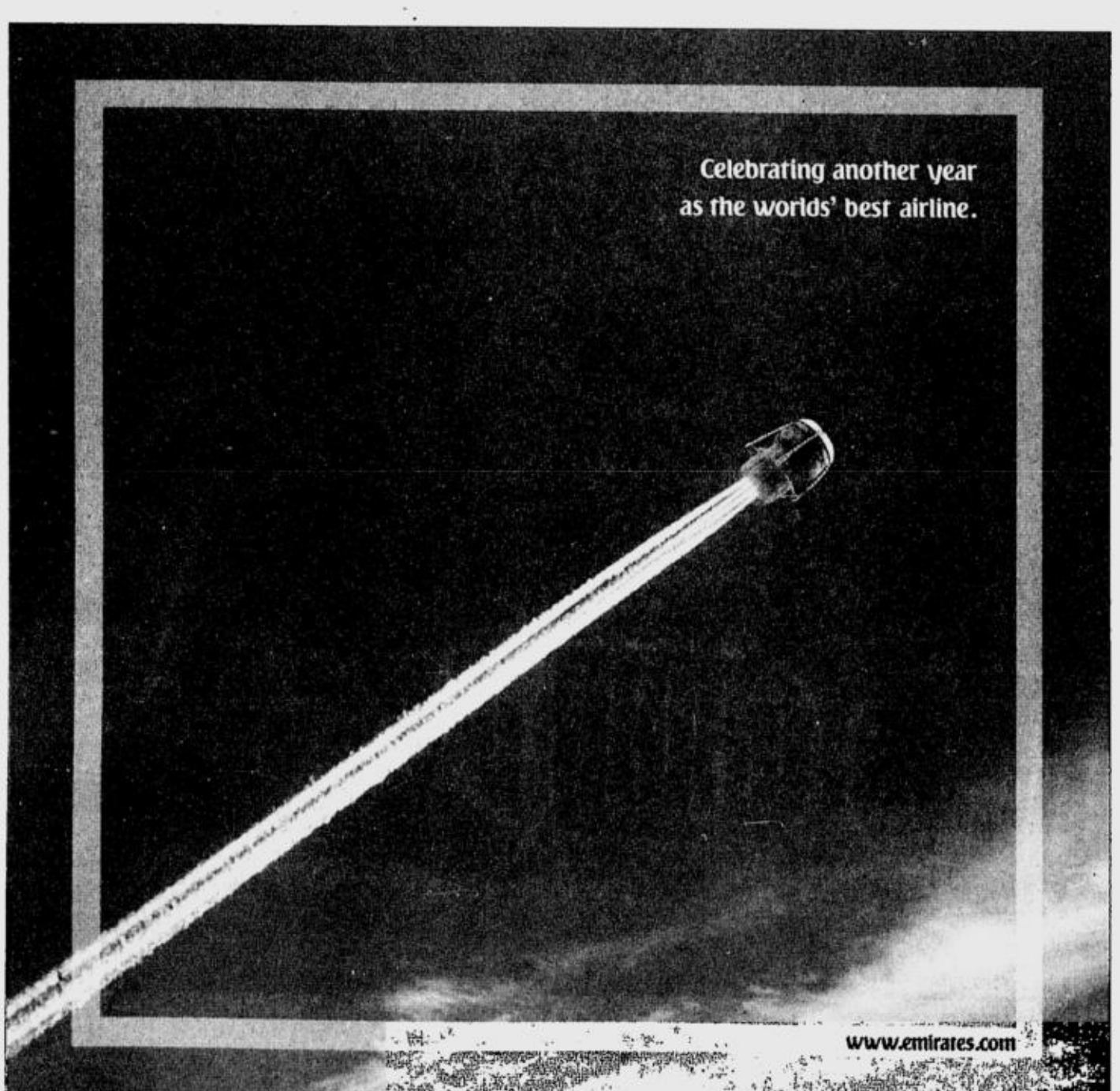
(C) Individuals receiving a combination of compensation and business income (mixed income). This includes a married individual receiving purely compensation income whose spouse derives income from business. (In case of married individuals who are still required to file returns, only one return for the taxable year shall be filed by either spouse to cover the income of both spouses.)

(D) Employees whose total compensation income, regardless of the amount, whether from a single or several employers during the calendar year, the income tax of which has not been withheld correctly, that is, that the total withholding tax does not equal the total tax due on total compensation income for the taxable year.

(E) In case of married individuals where one of the spouses received compensation income exceeding P60,000, a return shall be filed to include the income of the other spouse whose compensation is P60,000 or less.

It should be noted, however, that the Bureau of Internal Revenue has come up with a proposal to dispense with the filing of income tax returns for qualified compensation income earners.

The proposed revenue regulations allow the "substituted" filing of ITR, provided all of the following conditions are met: (a) the employee is a pure compensation income earner, (b) the employee has a single employer, and (c) the taxes on the employee's income have been correctly withheld by the employer.



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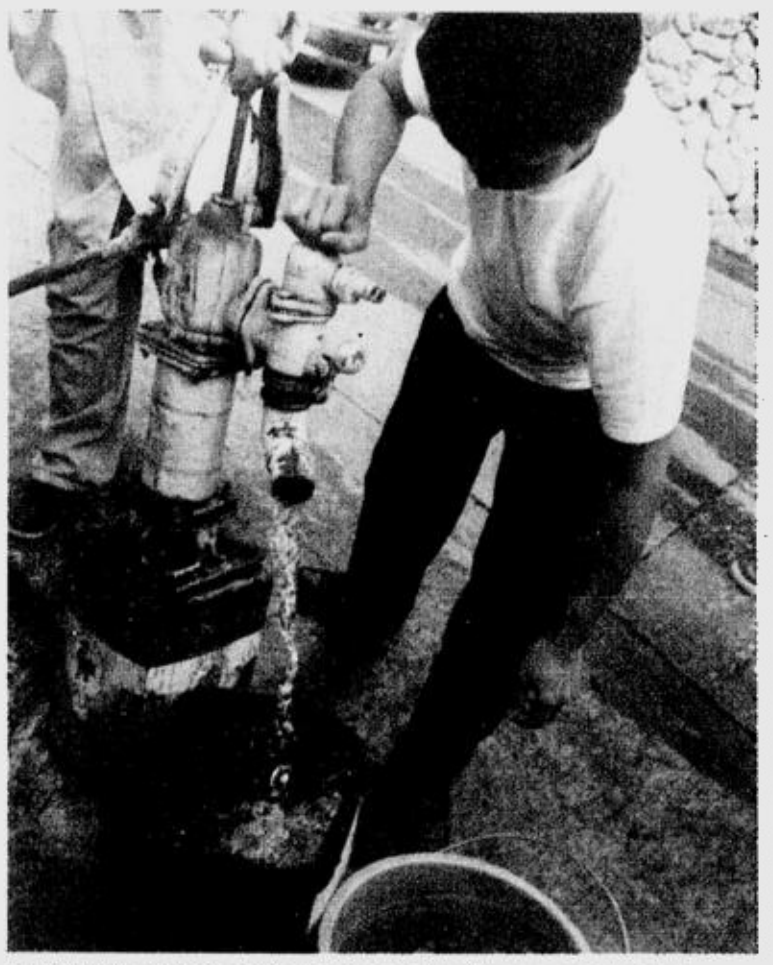

AN EMPLOYEE of a water delivery firm fills up a water tank.

Water war . . .

From page C4

The demand for water in Baguio, she said, was especially high during peak seasons where they sell some 20 tanks of water daily and more than 15 tanks during regular days using at least five trucks.

Each water tank contains at least 30 drums of spring water.

Officials of the Cordillera Water Delivery (CWD), which had been in the business for more than five years, said they were rationing at least 30 tanks of water daily using four trucks that contain 30 drums each.

At P22 to P25 per drum, the firm nets P19,800 to P22,500 daily.

Butch Mendoza, CWD officer-in-charge, said they were extracting water from a pressurized deep well.

"We only paid for the water and drilling permits," he said.

Bottled water

Similarly, bottled water had become a lucrative business in the city.

Water refilling stations are around every corner and the delivery of purified water was a new service provided by the water companies.

Reydel Estacio, Aqua Safe general manager, said they deliver at least 100 containers daily. Each container carries five gallons of purified water.

A drum of water bought from these private delivery firms cost P25 each.

A typical Baguio household has about five of these drums (bought for P450 for the plastic drums and P380 for the steel tanks which are used to carry bulk powdered milk, glucose and even hazardous chemicals) so that meant P125 for each delivery.

Most water delivery companies would not deliver less than eight drums.

"It's really unfair. One cubic meter of water from us is only P20 while theirs sell for P125," said Arenas, who wants to dispel notions that they are in cahoots with the private delivery firms.

"They are actually our competitors because they are getting our consumers. And at a very expensive price at that," he said.

To curb excessive profiteering, the BWD said they would monitor illegal wells in the city.

Arenas said as of last year, there were 598 private deep wells and only 50 wells operated by the BWD.

He said most of the private delivery firms got their water from their own deep wells.

He said policing these wells has to be done in coordination with the National Water Regulatory Board but the board has not really addressed this water problem.

BWD is also thinking of reviving its ambitious Bulk Water Project which would provide an additional 100 cubic meters of water daily to the city (BWD can only service 34,000 cubic meter daily).

But as of now, Baguio is still caught in its own private water war and the private water haulers are winning the battle.

Cards are no longer just for buying on credit

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

THOSE 3 inch by 2 inch plastic cards in about 2 million Filipinos' wallets are largely usually used for credit purchases in the Philippines.

Elsewhere in the world, however, plastic cards have more varied uses. This prompted MasterCard International to overhaul its image and market itself as a provider of payment solutions system.

IN THE Philippines alone, MasterCard has launched 10 new programs such as the Smart

Andre Sekulic, MasterCard president for Asia-Pacific, points out that the firm's move to package itself as more than just a credit card firm has paid off.

In the Philippines alone, MasterCard has launched 10 new programs such as the Smart Money of Smart Communications Inc., a product that has been hailed as the first in the world.

There is also Metrobank's Maestro, a program with the Bank of the Philippine Islands and Globe Telecom that allows the transfer of money via a text message.

MARKETING STRATEGY

"The Philippines is good for innovations and these would not have happened if we had been using the '70s or '80s business model," Sekulic told a select group of Asian journalists who attended MasterCard's Asia-Pacific Annual Meeting in Shanghai last March 11 to 13.

Sekulic attributed the move to MasterCard's CEO Robert W. Selander. He said the CEO recognized early on that the credit card business was changing. These global changes including mergers and acquisitions in the corporate level while in the consumer level, changes were also happening.

In the late '90s Selander articulated a simple and clear strategy for the credit card firm—focus, strength and differentiate.

So over the past years, MasterCard has aggressively campaigned for innovations in payment solutions. They tied up with several suppliers and introduced the use of chip instead of the magnetic stripe at the back of credit cards.

Thus the tagline, "Shaping the Future of Money."

MasterCard International VP for communications Georgette Tan admits that revenues from non-credit card sources are increasing but she is quick to point out that the firm is still aggressively pursuing its marketing efforts for the credit card.

Last year, it launched the Priceless campaign in the Philippines and according to Ajay Bhalla, SVP and GM for South East Asia, their survey shows that MasterCard is now a well-known brand in the country.

During the conference, attended by 1,300 (the highest in the firm's annual meeting history) bankers and technology company executive, credit card officials took turns at convincing the participants to look more closely into their operations and see where payment solutions can increase cost and increase productivity and efficiency.

Topics that were discussed include seizing e-business opportunities, mobile commerce opportunities and challenges, commercial payment solutions, credit risk management, product development and best practices, segment driven portfolio marketing, debit and prepaid card best practices and best practices for reaching the underserved market.

In his talk on commercial payments solutions, MasterCrad VP Peter Gordon pointed out that in the Western countries, 50 percent of an organization's business transactions cost $2,500 and below yet in terms of time and energy spent these transactions are significant. What MasterCard has offered is the use of the card for small transaction through its corporate cards or government purchase cards.

The point is that organizations can now empower certain individuals to transact up to a limited value, eliminating the usual process of writing request, issuing a voucher, then an invoice then a check.

The commercial payment solution is non-individual cards that are used for business transactions.

The system is widely used in Australia and the Taiwanese government.

Gordon said MasterCard was in serious talks with Philippine banks that are interested in adopting similar systems.

Gordon admits that while the contribution of CPS to MasterCard's revenues remains small, he expects revenues to increase by 38 percent this year following a 20-percent increase last year.

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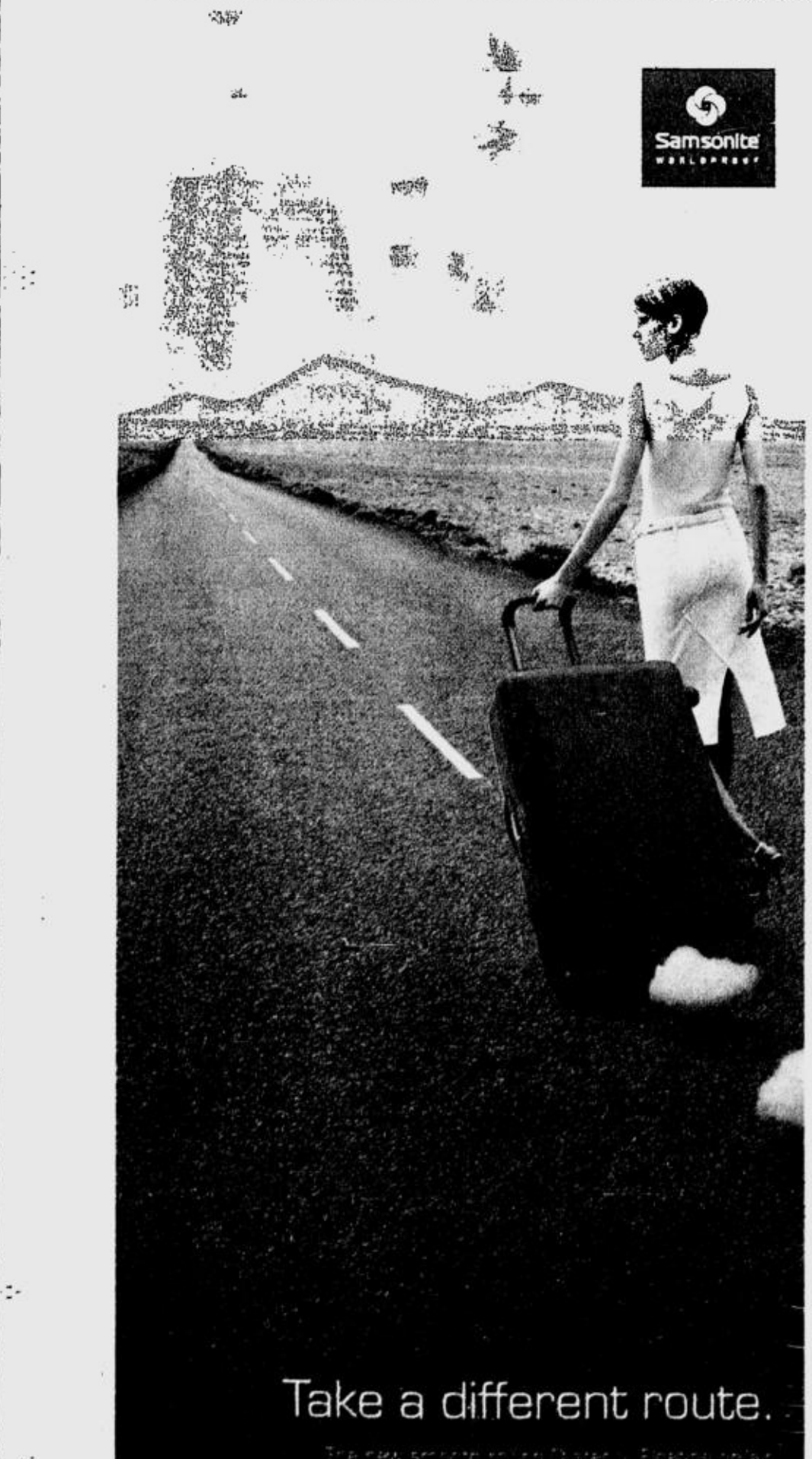

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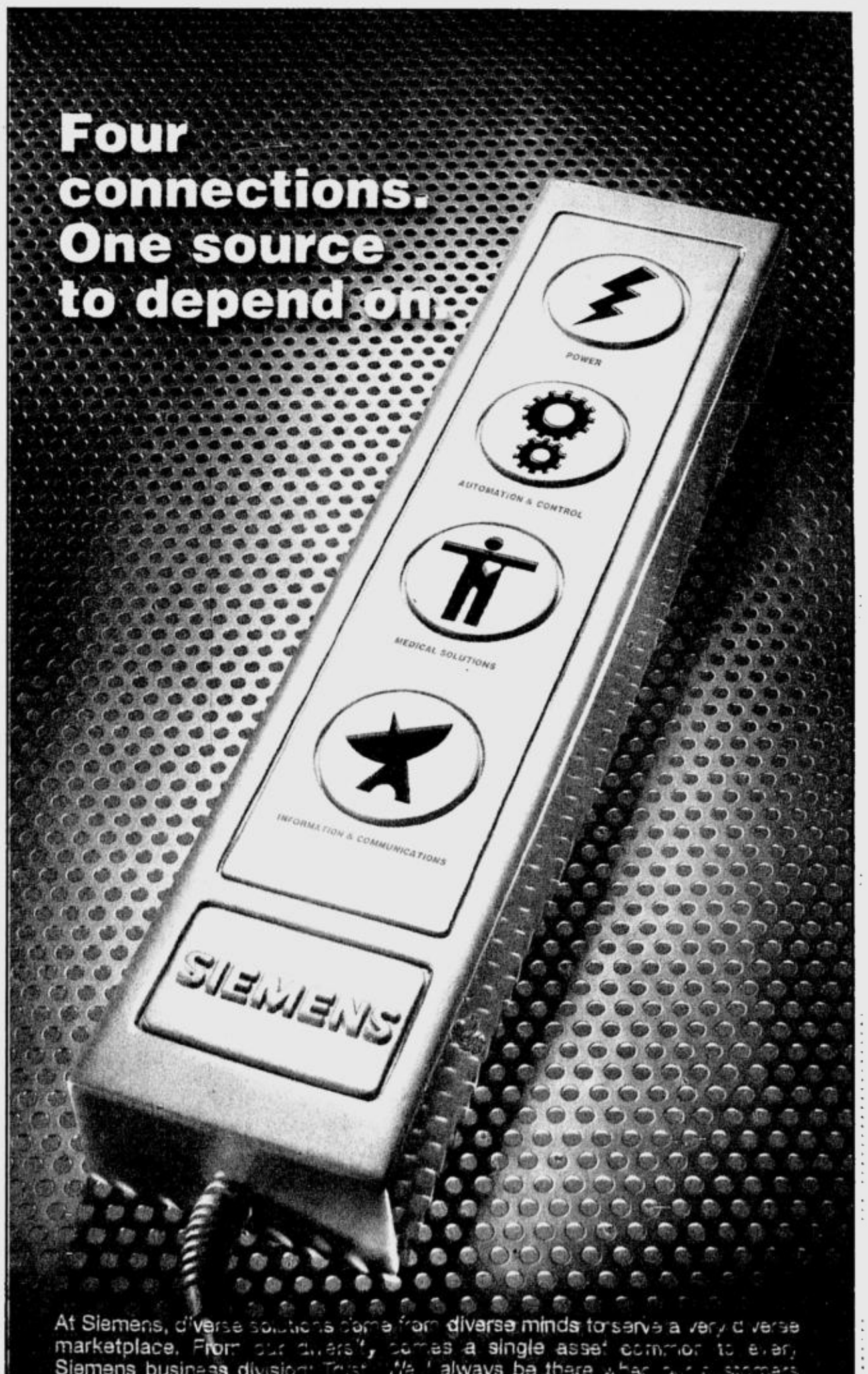

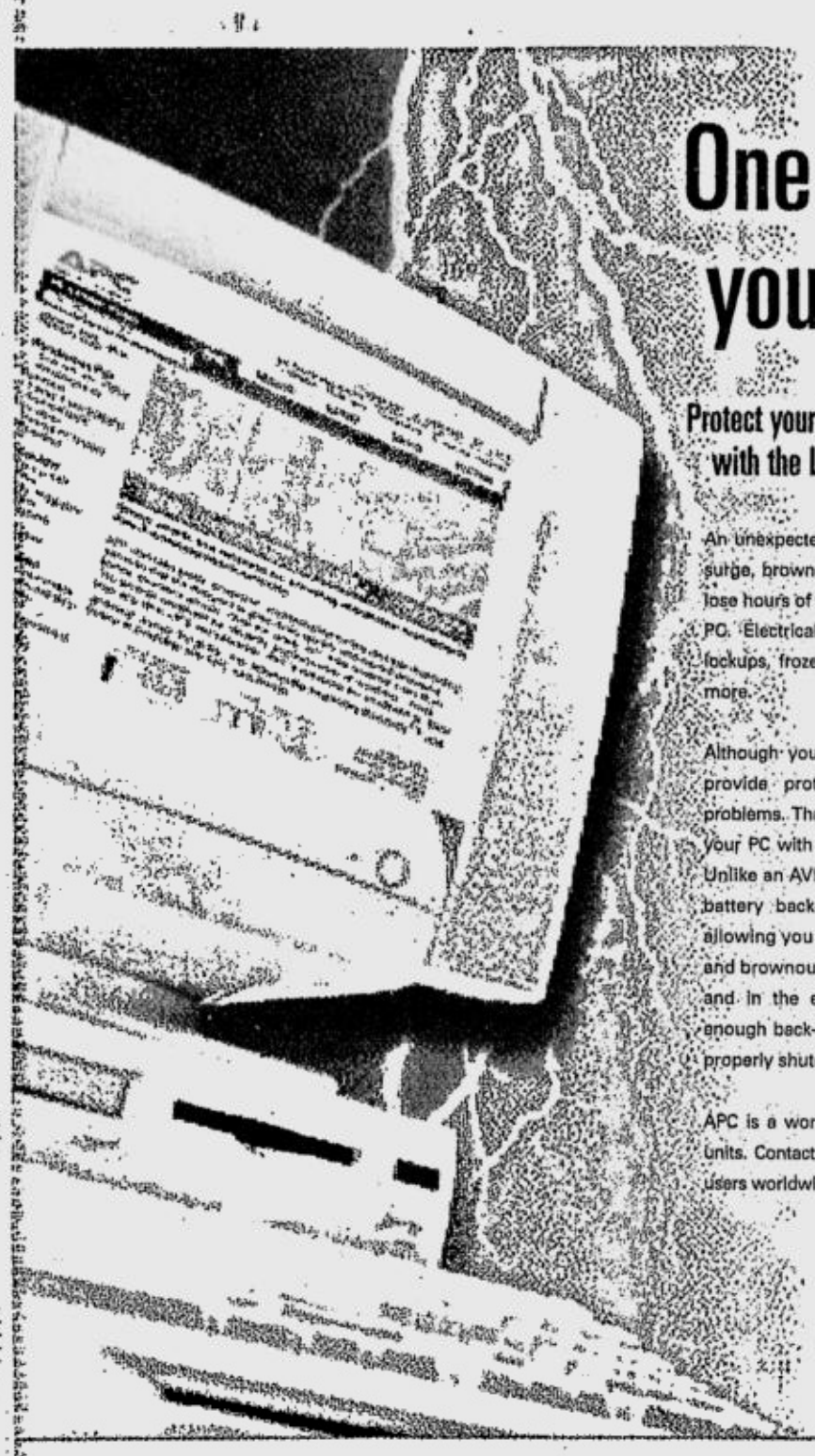

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2002

BUSINESS*Friday*

Water war heats up in cool Baguio City

By Frank Cimatu and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Hector Begeo won gold medals from the 1970s to the 1990s running 3,000 meters and jumping on a small pool of water every lap. When he was about to retire here in 1998, he decided to get into the business of delivering water to Baguio folk.

Begeo's gold sense is still on track. The water delivery business is now the hottest business in the city, next to *wagwag* or second-hand clothes.

"My water makes you strong. I only drink from my water that's why I became a good runner," Begeo claims.

Other private water haulers cannot make the same claim but then in this game, it's not the magic qualities of your water that counts, but if you can deliver.

Jet Dumpayan, public information officer of the Department of Trade and Industry, said there are 142 private water delivery firms and water refilling stations in the city registered at DTI since 1997.

Begeo's business is known simply as "Begeo's Water Delivery." Others have names like "Highland Mist Too," "Water of Recca Water Delivery Services," "Aqua Tree," "Lily of the Valley Water Delivery," "Drop By Jo Water Supply," "Wood Spring," "Rain Mist" and "Ligtasna Water Refill Station"—all referring to a time when water was presumably plentiful in the city.

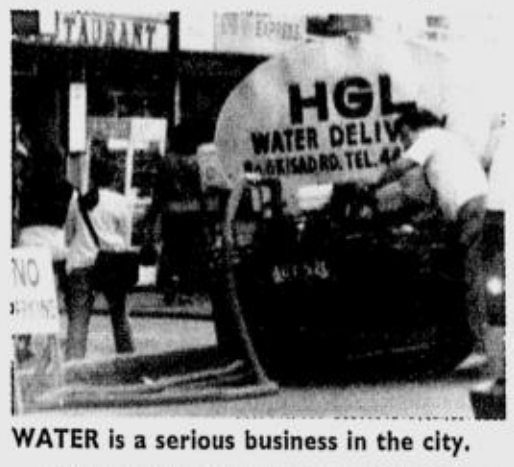
Water shortage

But Baguio has been suffering from acute water shortage since 1972, said Luzviminda Dickman, owner of Dickman Water Delivery.

Only a few private firms, however, have been delivering water to homes.

The forerunners of these private haulers are the old Igorot women carrying cylindrical cans of water through the tight corridors of the Baguio City public market.

The Baguio Water District admitted that it could only provide a third of the city's daily water requirement.



WATER is a serious business in the city.

"Right now, our water supply has gone down further by 40 percent," said Albert Arenas, BWD assistant manager.

Now, everybody's hands are dipping into the water can.

The Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation has plunked down P3 million for its Aqua Tree Water Delivery. HGL Inc. invested P2 million for its own water delivery business. The Baguio Vegetable Retailers Savings and Credit put up Bavesco Purified Water.

According to the DTI, most of the private water haulers had an average initial investment of between P150,000 and P200,000.

But some—like Gesca Enterprises, Abagatan Water Delivery and Sendero Water Delivery—had an initial investment of as low as P20,000.

All you need is a huge tank to hold the water, a truck to carry it and a long hose to bring it to the houses. All the tanks have been printed with various telephone numbers so residents will know the most reliable firms.

The water being delivered, it turned out, was dirt-cheap.

Dickman admitted that they get their water from a natural spring located in Kennon Road for free. Their delivery price, she said, depended on how far the customer's area was from their office.

WATER/ C2

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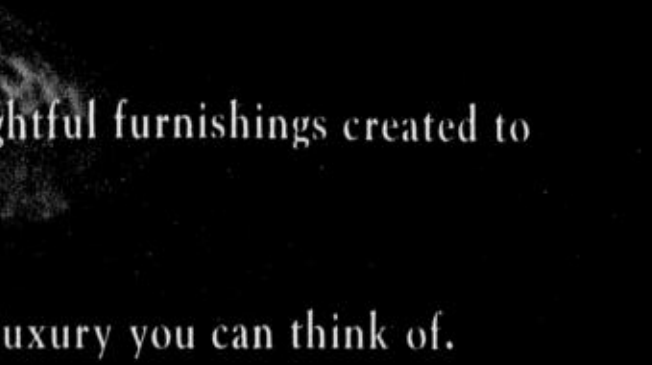

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LIFESTYLE @Home

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso • Subsection Editor Marge C. Enriquez

J. Paul Getty Center's monument in leaf and stone

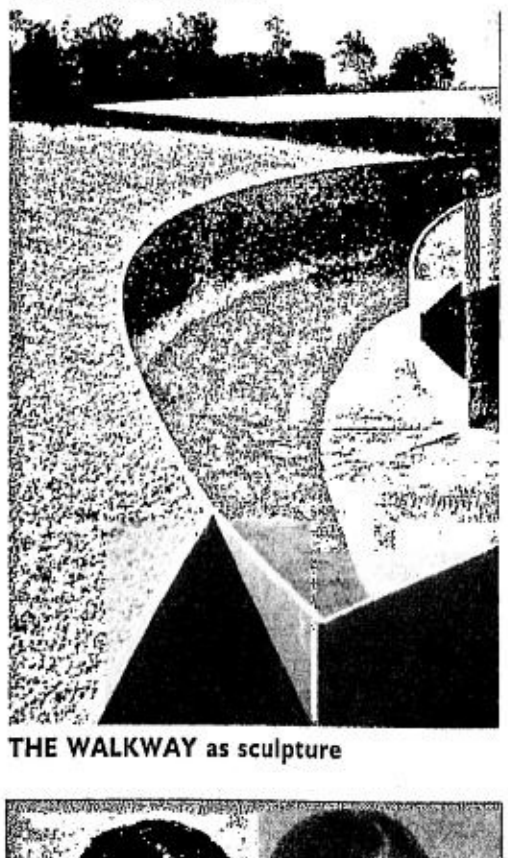
Text and photos by Adrian Lizares
Contributor

A VISIT to the J. Paul Getty Center in Los Angeles is a truly remarkable jaunt into modern architecture. My first experience of it happened as a fluke. On a car along Ocean Drive in Malibu one day, I was appreciating the California coastline when I spotted a small sign announcing the J. Paul Getty Villa. We entered the Roman-style villa, which was resplendent with formal gardens and clipped hedges. The villa is currently closed, but it led me to the Center. The J. Paul Getty Center opened in 1997 its modernist doors to much acclaim. In 1998 I visited it and spent the whole day admiring the Alma Tademas, the Van Goghs and other Impressionists. The manuscripts and the ancient art collection were quite exquisite.

On this, my second trip to the Center, I focus on the grounds and the gardens. The J. Paul Getty Center hosts volunteer and docent-guided tours. There are daily architectural tours, as well as tours of the gardens and the landscaping. I drag my friend along and sign him up for the garden and landscaping tours. On our first visit, we had taken the architectural tour, which gave us an idea what $2 bil-

J. PAUL/ p.D6

BLUE-ICE and agaves



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Shopaholic and proud of it

Shopping fulfills my function in the order of the universe

By Jose Javier Reyes
Contributor

I HAVE convinced myself that I will shop till I literally drop (out of sheer fatigue or because a cashier is threatening to cut my plastic money in two) as my contribution to the economic recovery program of the Department of Trade and Industry. Each time I buy something I am doing it for (Trade Secretary) Mar Roxas. I get this feeling of emptiness each time I exit from a mall or a department store without carrying a shopping bag. It is not that what I buy is something I really need. It is because shopping fulfills my function in the order of the universe.

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

When somebody asks me, "*Ano na naman yang pinakyaw mo?*" I humbly reply, "It does not matter. I am doing this for the sake of our country. We have to keep the economy moving."

I can claim that I am trying to get into the Guinness Book of Records for having the largest collection of shopping bags from all over the world. Others collect stamps, pig figurines, Chinese antiques or paintings of old Filipino masters. I collect shopping bags.

But shopping is never easy although spending comes naturally—like blinking your eyes, breathing or eating. You wish that splurging could always be pleasant, if not intelligent, in the stores where you choose to burn your hard-earned *datung*. Unfortunately, in some cases, shopping could test your patience and endurance or strain your tolerance.

No commitment

Is it asking too much to expect salespersons to feign enthusiasm—even a hint of excitement—when attending to a customer? I realize that they get an inadequate minimum wage or are under a three-month contract, thus do not develop a sense of commitment or loyalty to the company. I try to be patient a bit longer when talking to them although they show an expression two shades above irritation and a hue beneath contempt. I tell myself that I am going to have only a short-term contact with this person and I have no plans of starting any form of meaningful relationship with him/her.

What particularly irks me is when salespersons make it obvious they just don't care. I count not only up to 10 but up to 110 when salesladies, deep in conversation, refuse to be interrupted. Sometimes, I feel that they are discussing the exact location of Osama bin Laden and my eagerness to make a purchase is a rude interruption to an important discussion.

When they do acknowledge my earthly existence, they bark an Arctic monosyllabic "no" without moving a single muscle in response to my question, "Do you have this merchandise in this size?" I feel like a gatecrasher in an exclusive party who had the gall to be chummy-chummy with a host who knows every guest.

Another mind-boggling experience I have encountered many times is the absolute ignorance of the salespersons about the merchandise they are selling. I do not expect all the salespeople in a bookstore to be doctoral candidates in comparative literature at Yale University or alumni of speed reading courses offered by Aurora Roldan. But is it unrealistic or idealistic to expect that, if you are hired to sell something, you know what you are selling? What pains me is when I ask a fluttering salesgirl if they have a copy of a particular tome and I get a stare that spells *tabula rasa* in 15 languages.

Of course what the salesgirl does is trot to the nearest fellow employee and chirp, "Ate Precy, *meron ba raw tayong... Ano nga yung* title *po*?" Ate Precy, apparently higher in rank (as shown by a better tailored uniform), will flash an authoritative smile and say, "*Sandali lang*, Sir." Approximately 15 minutes later, Ate Precy returns looking tired and somewhat harassed, only to announce: "*Wala na*, Sir." You ask Ate Precy when they will have a new stock of the title and she replies predictably, "*Ewan*, Sir." End of conversation.

Incomprehensible

What should I have expected? To this day, I still do not understand why, during one of my ritualistic visits to a bookstore, I found Kurt Vonnegut's novel "Breakfast of Champions" in the cookbook shelf. Or "The Little Prince" in the biography section.

I get a culture shock each time I enter a department store/boutique/hole in the wall in the United States. A salesperson yelps, "Hi, how're ya doin'? Can I help you?" while flashing a smile that reminds me of Barney, the purple dinosaur. I will have to be rushed to the intensive care unit of the Makati Medical Center if and when a Pinoy salesperson approaches me as I examine an article of clothing and says, "You know what, this other shirt will suit you better." Out here, even if I dare buy a half-shirt that would show my belly looking like a can that had been stepped on by an elephant, the sales clerk will simply stare at me as if I were Brad Pitt or Diether Ocampo and try to find the most effective way to consummate the transaction. *Oo nga naman, pakialam niya kung magkagasta ako para magmukhang tanga.*

But I guess in my rather thick book of shopping horror stories, the worst took place last Feb. 15 when, between meetings, I decided to kill time at the Glorietta with some friends. I read the magic word plastered outside Rustan's: big, bold, red SALE. Like other special four-letter words that elicit immediate reactions from vulnerable individuals like me, I—with two friends—dashed to the store.

I purchased several shirts at U (Buy one, take one, *kapatid*!). Merely participating in a sale was fulfilling—even close to a religious experience. The cute black burlap shopping bags would also add to my interesting collection.

Alarm bells

But as we made our way out of the store the alarms started screaming. Immediately, three guards surrounded us. In fairness, they were nice. It was not only embarrassing, it was humiliating with people glaring at me as if I was Manila's answer to Winona Ryder.

I tried my best to laugh it off. Apparently someone screwed up somewhere and now I was being screwed. My two friends felt uncomfortable when the guards started unloading the contents of my shopping bags—itemizing the purchases made. I told them the receipts inside the bags proved that everything was paid for. But they had to do their job. Meanwhile, people stared at me like I was responsible for the bombings in Mindanao.

A few seconds later a senior sales-something joined the pack ransacking my goodies.

At this point, humiliation became irritation. All I wanted was to get out of the place not only because of this major embarrassment but because my friends were also put on the spot. The senior sales-something had the explanation—a cashier forgot to remove the security tabs on two items.

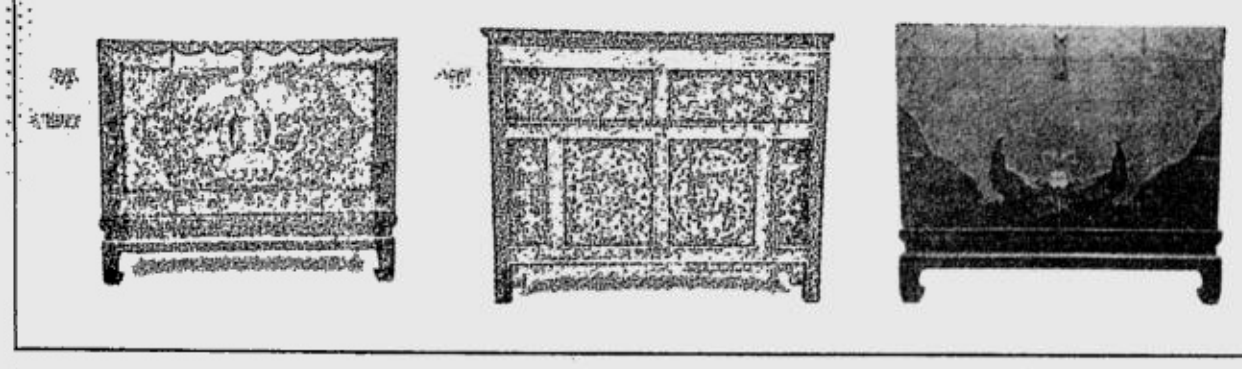
Has the traumatic incident soured me on shopping? Shall I take that experience as God's way of telling me not to be a major sucker for huge department store sales?

Not!

I consider the incident as just an "occupational hazard." You can break your limbs playing soccer. You can damage your spine doing gymnastics. You can get really bad skin from exposure to UV rays playing golf. And you get into embarrassing or irritating situations like this when you decide to dedicate your life to sincere, honest-to-goodness, uncontrollable consumerism.

E-mail the author at directedby@hotmail.com

Raffles Fine Arts
a new associate gallery of THE TOMLINSON COLLECTION
PURE LAND
Sacred Arts of Tibet
An exhibition of Sculptures & Furniture from the Land of Snows
Saturday, March 16 to Sunday, March 24,2002
58 Jupiter St.
Bel-Air Village, Makati City
Tel.No. (632) 895-0409
Gallery Hours: 10am to 6pm



RN82876

Essence of time

RADO is one of the world's leaders in the development of breakthrough design and technology in timepieces. The company was responsible for the development of the sapphire crystal, a scratch-proof face used for high-end watches. It was responsible for developing the world's first watch made entirely from diamonds, the hardest substance known to man.

Known as an innovator, a Rado watch has a dual purpose—it's a valuable, modern piece of jewelry and it is a highly accurate and functional timepiece. Unlike other brands that use traditional materials like gold, brass or steel, Rado uses scratch-proof materials like hard metal, high-tech ceramics and sapphire crystal to provide all its products not only beauty but long-lasting value unmatched by any other brand in the world.

Its latest watch design, Ovation, is now on display at Montre at The Podium. Inspired by the original and highly successful oval DiaStar, Ovation merges the best in technology. Like any jewelry, it is guaranteed to last and keep its luster for a long time, utilizing a no-frills, retro futuristic design that has made the original DiaStar fashionable for generations. The watch and bracelet are comfortable to the skin as a result of the quality of the materials used. It is available in three sizes and dial variations exclusively at Montre.

Montre will have its formal opening tomorrow. The inauguration will be highlighted by "TWM (The World of Music)," a series of live mall concerts marrying classic with pop, retro and jazz. The concert will start at 5 p.m. at 2/L Podium.

Mindoro mining town asks to be heard

First of two parts

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

THE ISSUE of environment versus development can be a touchy one. Each side has arguments in its favor, and so the issue can become a big problem in need of objective evaluation. On one hand, the question is whether the environment will be sacrificed to make way for development projects in the name of progress while on the other, to what extent development projects are to be kept on hold to protect the environment.

This is the dilemma faced by the people of Victoria, a mining town in Oriental Mindoro, on one side, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), as well as the provincial government, on the other.

From the backgrounder on the case, we learn that in January 2000, the Philippine government entered into a Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA) with Aglubang-Crew Minerals (subsidiary of the Crew Development Corp. of Canada). The agreement gave Aglubang-Crew exclusive rights to develop the property in a mining area in Mindoro Oriental for a period of 25 years. For its operations, known as the Mindoro Nickel Project, the company would invest $700 million and utilize modern processing methods to produce "40,000 tons of nickel, 3,050 tons of cobalt and 126,000 tons of ammonium sulfate (rice fertilizer) per year." This was great news to the barangays of Victoria—the host community—and other participating barangays.

On July 16, 2001, however, Aglubang-Crew received a notice from the DENR canceling the MPSA. It must be noted here that the MPSA was entered into by the previous administration. If this had any bearing on the case, no one stressed it. The cancellation was an unexpected blow to Victoria, which claimed that it was issued without prior consultation with the people.

This turn of events shattered the town's hopes and dreams for a better life for its people. And not wanting to take things sitting down, the captains of 28 (out of a total 32) barangays in Victoria converged in Manila recently to air their grievances and to appeal to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and even their *kabayan* in the Senate, Noli de Castro, to help them.

Emma C. Burgos, president of the Association of Barangay Councils of Victoria, explained that it was her group that should be heard in this case, as "those who are opposing us are not even legitimate residents of Victoria."

Adding salt to the wound is the 25-year moratorium on all large-scale mining activities in the entire province passed January this year by the provincial government through its Board. Victoria people are now questioning the legality of the moratorium passed by the provincial legislative body which, in their understanding of the Mining Act of 1995, does not have jurisdiction over such matters.

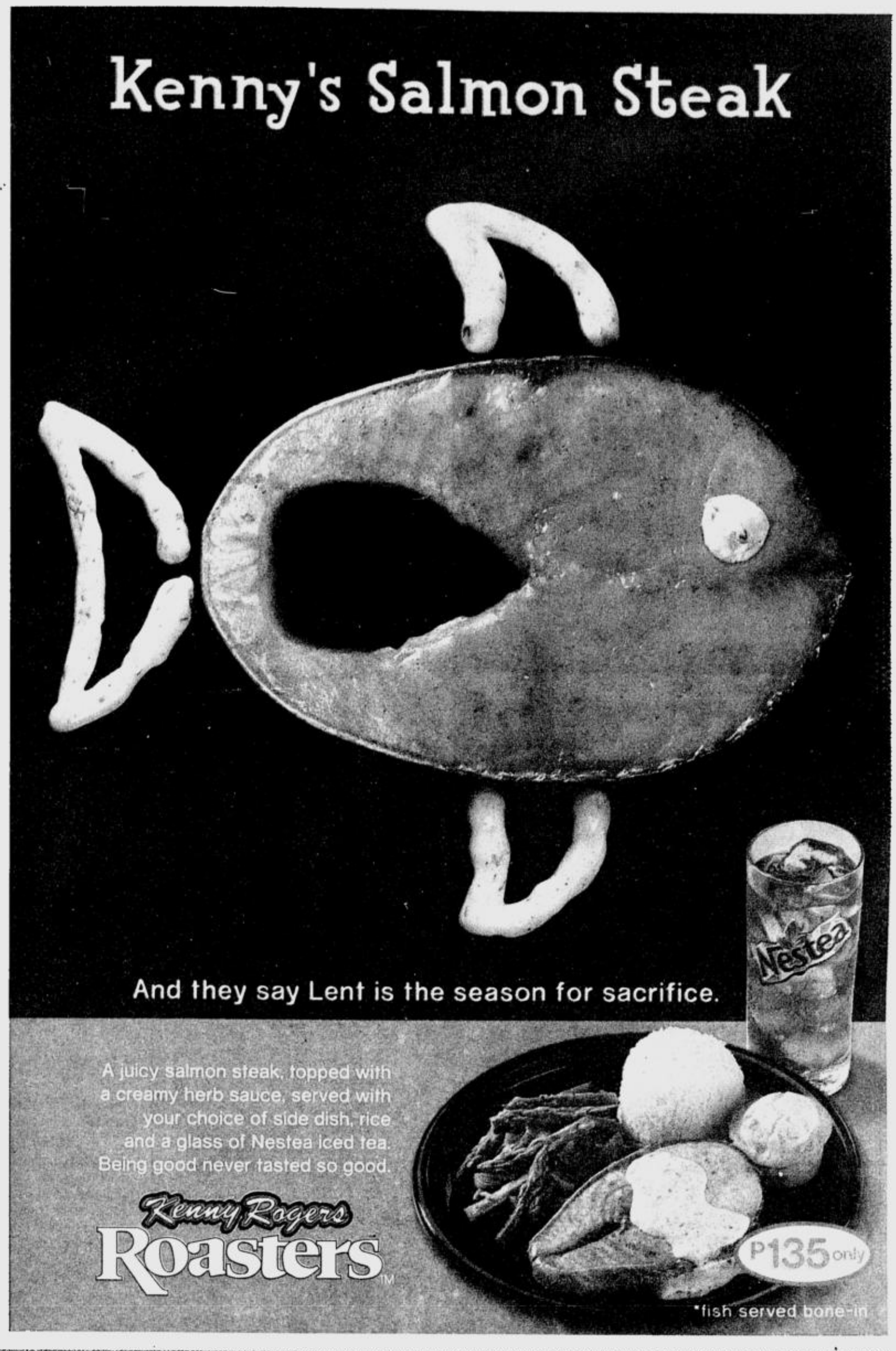
Aglubang-Crew has filed a formal appeal with the Office of the President of the Philippines and, should it fail in this appeal, is determined to "pursue recovery of the MPSA, both through the Philippine courts and the Foreign Investment Protection Agreement signed by the Philippines and Canada in 1995."

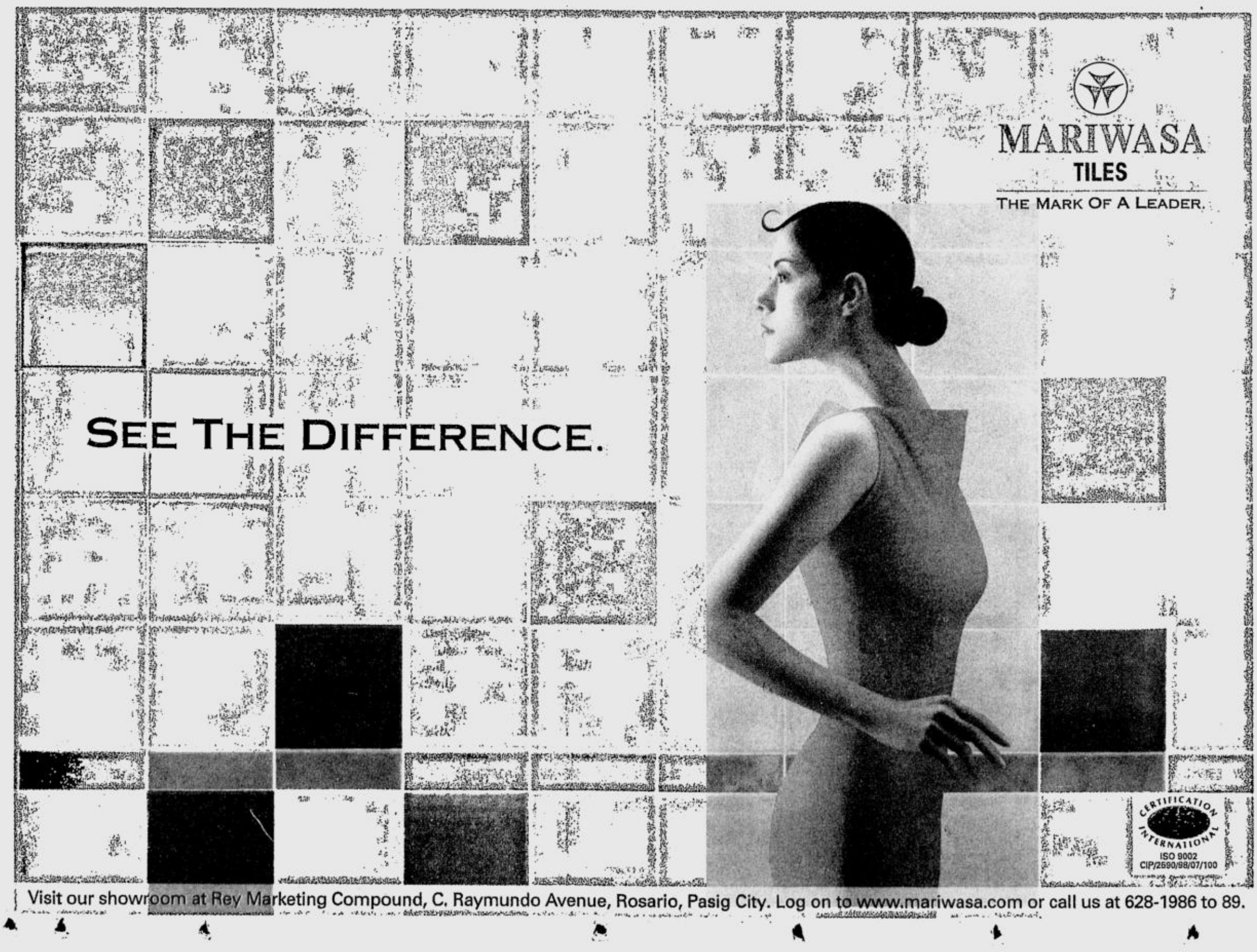
Why the cancellation?

What we wanted to know from the facts given to us by Burgos and her group of barangay councils was why the DENR would do something as drastic as canceling a formal agreement like the MPSA. It seemed contrary to the national agenda to invite foreign investments to the country, and to the general perception that the national leadership was concerned over peoples' welfare as much as it was over the environment's.

The DENR had no representative in that meeting in Manila to give us its side, which we intend to get as soon as possible. But Andy Torres, chief geologist of Crew Minerals (Phil.) Inc., was around to answer our questions regarding the cancellation. A report on his replies which, of course, reflect the views of his company and those of Victoria, will be forthcoming in this section.

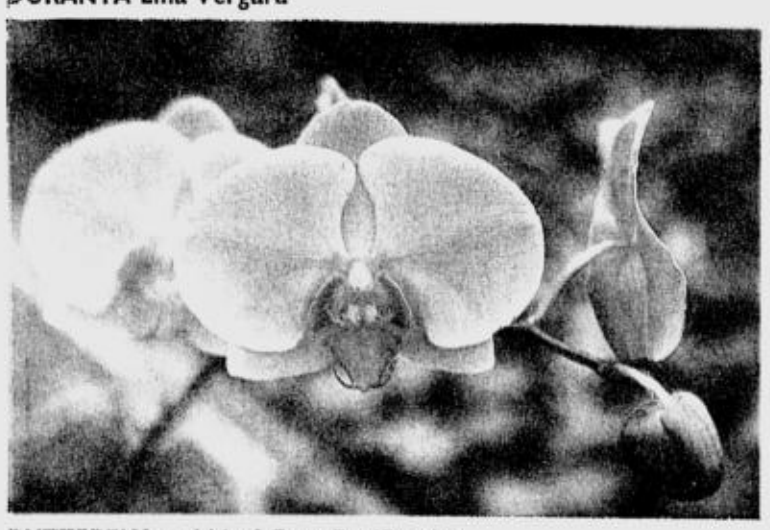
Next: Q&A on the cancellation of a mining agreement in Oriental Mindoro





Quaint garden show at UP Los Baños

DURANTA Lina Vergara



BUTTERFLY orchid of Cora Purificacion

By Tita V. Giron
Contributor

IF only for the scented verbena and a rare clerodendron, it is well worth going to far out Los Baños, Laguna to see the summer garden show at the social hall in the UP Los Baños (UPLB) campus.

Verbena is an old favorite garden plant that has not been seen in local gardens for a long time. In the old days, it used to be planted close to the house along with lilacs, *dama de noche*, bridal bouquet and bachelor's button. It is just the right plant in the right place at this year's garden show of the Los Baños Orchid Society, which goes nostalgic with the theme "Fiesta in the Barrios."

Buntings, *pabitin*, *maskara* and an all-white rooster add color and festive touch to the landscaped exhibit and garden market. At the center of it all is the image of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, on loan to the show by the local parish church of St. Therese of the Child Jesus.

New garden plants

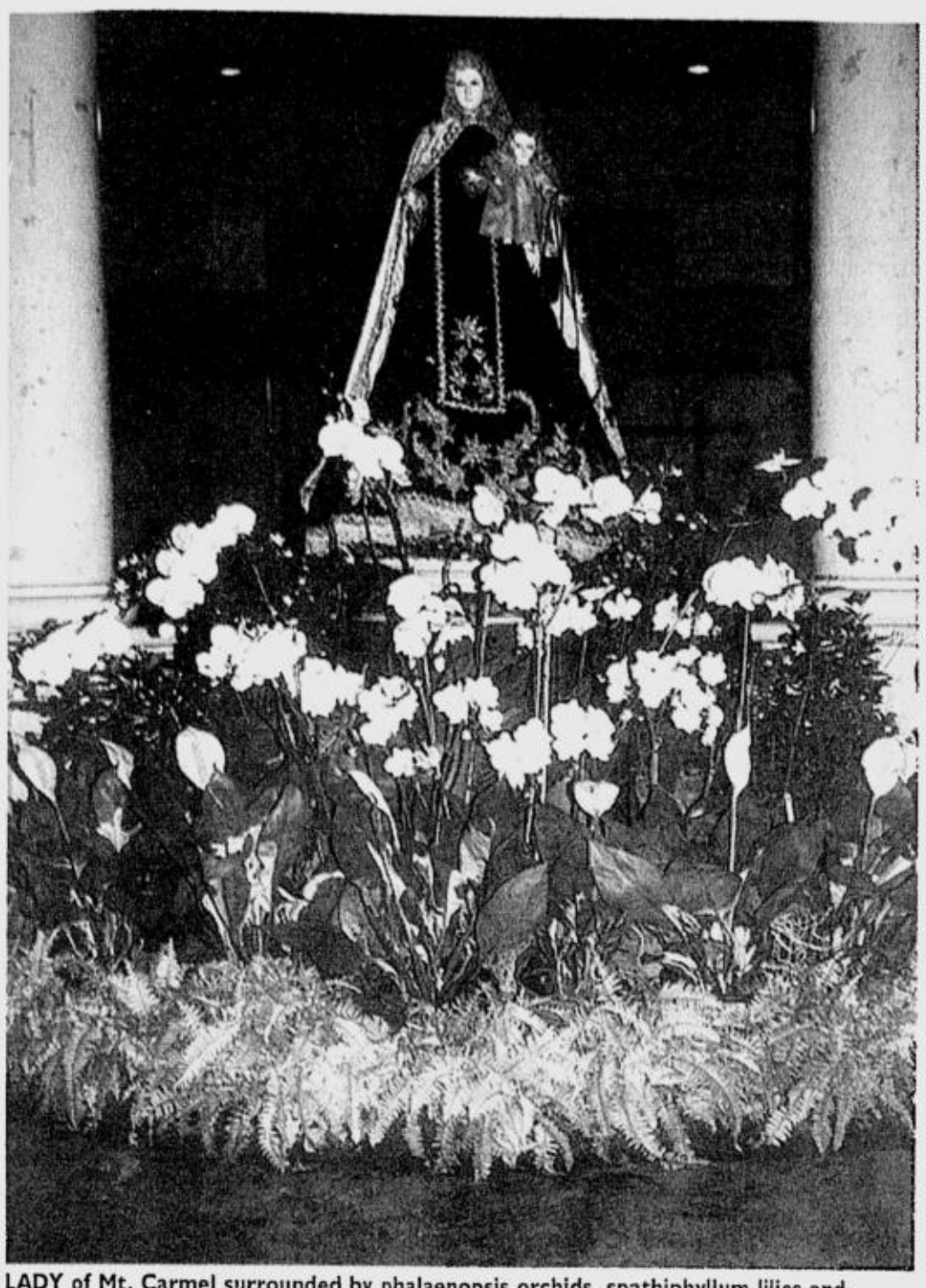
Garden people look forward to Los Baños shows to hunt for new plants. Once again, new plants developed and imported by local horticulturists and hobbyists are featured this year. Previous shows have exhibited hybrids created by scientists in the university, such as "*donya*" mussaenda series, bougainvilleas, orchids, hibiscus and aglaonemas. Some of these hybrids are now making it big in the international garden market.

This year's exciting introductions include two *ti* plants with new colors, a novelty tomato-pumpkin ornamental with bright colored fruits and some vines with no names.

A new plant in town, the imported "tomato-pumpkin" hybrid, has unique fruits that resemble tomatoes or pumpkins, depending on what the viewer has in mind.

The big surprise is a rare clerodendron with great potentials for a new garden variety; it has spectacular white flowers in clusters. However, it is not yet available to the public.

Pots of verbenas, on the other hand, are now in the market, along with newly introduced mini variegated spathiphyllum, epidendrum orchids for landscape, anthurium Lady Jane with purple flowers, white angel and other scented plants.



LADY of Mt. Carmel surrounded by phalaenopsis orchids, spathiphyllum lilies and variegated boston fern.

The Laguna show is celebrated for showcasing new plants

Garden show geography

It will save time and effort to learn the layout of the garden show beforehand to avoid going around in circles.

Start at the covered center stage where the main features are arranged clockwise. Usually, this is the area where exciting new plants are displayed. The center hall exhibitors in this show are Mable Chua, C.V. Lazaro, Ben Vergara, Vic Chin and Cora Purificacion. Lectures, demonstrations and exhibits are also held here.

From there, proceed to the outdoor exhibit where other members have their own landscaped displays.

Two plant markets

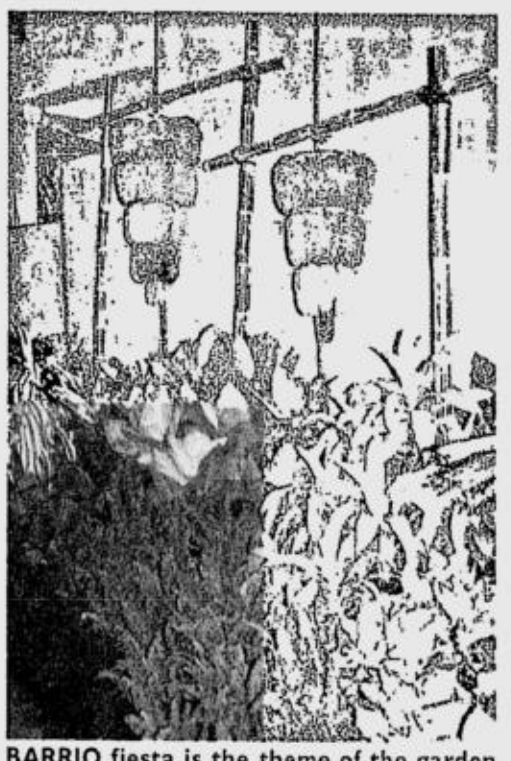
There are two garden markets which regular showgoers call "*taas*" and "*gubatum*."

Start at "*gubatum*" (from the word *gubat* or forest), which is at the downhill section of the show area. If you are facing the central stage, it is on the left side of the outdoor exhibit. Native plants, many of which are newly gathered from the wild, are on sale here along with landscaping materials and fruit trees. This is where buyers can find all kinds of local ferns, lipstick vines, orchids, cactus and succulents, water plants and palm seedlings.

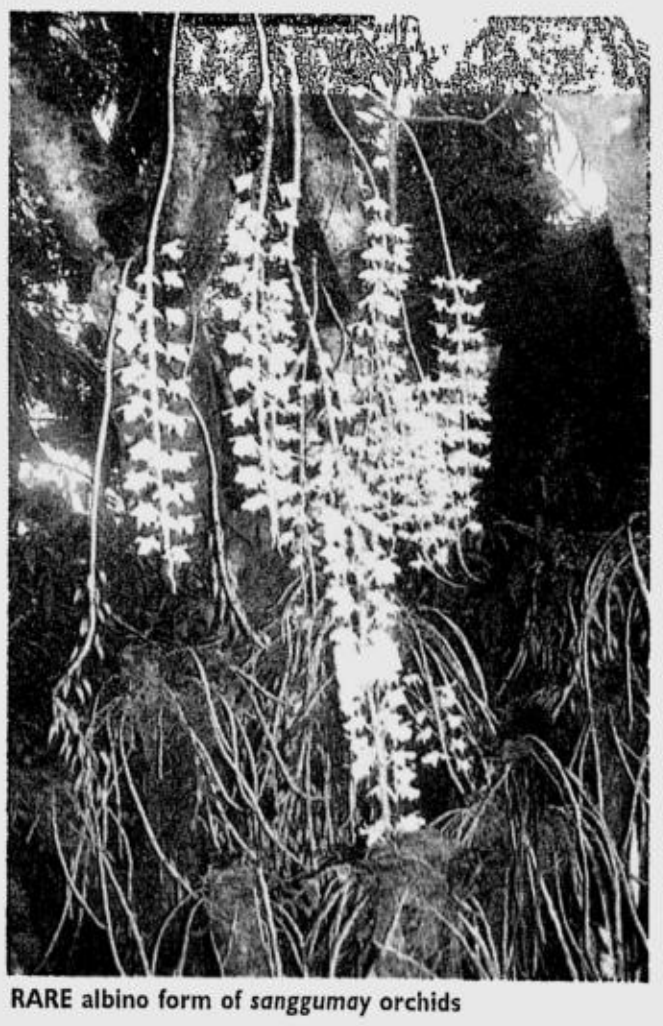
In addition, this is the place to look for bonsai materials, plants for terrarium and dish garden, moss, driftwood and other plant arts accessories. There are also community pots of palms, both local and foreign, with exotic names as *pinangga*, *sabal*, *negrosensis*, king's palm, spindle, chocolate palm and pink palm.

Haggling is the name of the game here.

"*Taas*" is the covered market located at the upper level. This is where imported and popular potted plants are sold. Prices are, more or less, fixed by sellers and quality is assured.



BARRIO fiesta is the theme of the garden show.



RARE albino form of *sanggumay* orchids

Scams along the highway

The highway leading to Los Baños is flanked by several garden centers. Beware of unscrupulous sellers, however. Although they are very few, they do give a bad name to the garden business, which Los Baños is famous for besides the hot spas.

Here are some tips: Compare prices before buying anything. Unscrupulous traders can overprice items exorbitantly.

If you are planning to buy the spectacular queen of the flowering tree, also called *Amherstia*, check if the flowers are really part of the tree and not just glued on or tied to the branches. (We are wondering if former Makati Mayor Elenita Binay was aware that the three drums of *Amherstias* she purchased from one of the dealers have flowers that had been artificially attached to the trees.)

Unless you know the dealers to be trustworthy, don't pay a deposit for deliveries. We know somebody who was duped by an unscrupulous dealer of landscaping materials who collected the deposit payment but didn't deliver.

The Los Baños garden show ends this Sunday. For more particulars, inquire from C.V. Lazaro at (0919) 421-1447 or Tony Pajaro at (049) 536-6804.

E-mail the author at mariettagiron@hotmail.com.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Pre-summer promo for bowling enthusiasts

POWER Bowl offers a pre-summer promo price of only P60/game for bowling and P150/hour for billiards, Mondays to Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. until March 31.

The center recently launched its Perfect 300 Challenge where the champion brings home P150,000 as grand prize in the final match on May 25. The first three perfect gamers win a home entertainment package worth P100,000 each. Special monthly prizes of P3,000 each are up for high series (three games with handicap) and high game (one game with handicap). Power Bowl is located at the 3/L of Power Plant, Rockwell Center. Call 898-1624.

GOINGS-ON

SPECIAL EVENT. The first "Family Futbol Cup" kicks off on March 17 at 4 p.m. in the Cuenca Park football in Ayala Alabang. Athletic De Larrauri and FC Mañosa square off in this first-of-its-kind soccer match featuring siblings of the Larrauri and Mañosa clans. "Family Futbol" presents soccer in still another light—as a family sports activity. To spice up the matches, distant relatives and close family friends are recruited like PBA "imports" to beef up the teams.

SPECIAL RAFFLE. Up to 50-percent discounts plus the chance to bring home a brand-new Philips VCD player are at stake in the Robinsons Malls' midnight sale today, 10 a.m. to 12 midnight. Over 70 brand-new units are at stake plus 200 audio CDs as consolation prizes.

Purchases made from any Robinsons Malls outlet, Robinsons Food Court, Robinsons Movieworld snack bar, or a one-time purchase of four Robinsons Movieworld tickets or a purchase of a Dreamday ticket from Dreamscape, Dream Town or Dream Zone qualifies the shopper to join.

Raffle draw will be held on March 22 at Robinsons Galleria.

SEMINAR. Filipino expert naturopath Dr. Ronnie Royo, a licensed therapist of the Department of Health, will be conducting a series of "Reflexology/ Acupressure" seminars on March 16-17, at the Training Room of the Philippine Science and Technology Center, 3/F, Pinagpala Building 2069-2073 C.M. Recto Avenue, Manila. Topics include "Fundamentals of Reflexology and Acupressure," "Anatomical Points of the Body" and "Spa Therapy." Call 734-4093.

HOMECOMINGS. St. Joseph's College Alumni Affairs invites all high school alumnae to a grand homecoming reunion on March 17. The school is celebrating its 70th foundation anniversary with a recollection and a Mass to be officiated by Fr. Romy Castro, at the Audio-Visual Resource Center (formerly Social Hall), 8 a.m.-12 nn. Lunch and socials will follow. Call the SJC Alumni Affairs Office at 723-0221 to 23 local 100 or 920-2481 or 0917-7933458.

Meanwhile, Batch '77 (silver jubilarians) and Batch '52 (golden jubilarians) of the Roosevelt College, San Roque and Cainta will host a grand alumni homecoming and reunion on March 23, at the Roosevelt College Campus, Sumulong, Cainta. Call 681-6219.

The Philippine Normal University Alumni Association Inc. will hold its general homecoming on April 28 at the Philippine Normal University, Taft Avenue, Manila. With this year's theme "The Filipino Teachers' World View: The PNUAA Advocacy for Excellence," the homecoming will be highlighted by the awarding of 10 outstanding alumni (national level), couple awardees and family awardees. Nominations for these awards, together with the supporting credentials should be sent to the PNUAA Office, San Marcelino Street, corner Ayala Boulevard, Ermita, Manila today. Ticket holders will have a chance to win major prizes in a raffle that will be held during the homecoming. Call Teresa R. Cordero at 524-3821 or 524-0749.

SHOPPING GALORE. "Summer Shades at the Fort" will be held on March 16 and 17 at the NBC Tent. The bazaar offers export-quality garments like designer jeans, T-shirts for adults and children; home decor like candles, kitchen items, fashion accessories like bags and shoes, toys and children's books. The bazaar is open 9 a.m.-7 p.m., on Saturday and Sunday. Shop@thefort is held on the second weekend of every month. Free parking to all shoppers. Shop@thefort also accepts local and foreign credit cards.

WORKSHOP. ProActive Center for Training holds a seminar/workshop on restaurant management until March 20, 1-5 p.m., at Bedas Restaurant, C-5, Libis, QC. Call 823-4947.

RETREAT. The Contemplative Outreach Philippines will present an "Introductory Centering Prayer Retreat" today until March 17, at the St. Joseph Marello Retreat House in Tagaytay. Call 871-8315, 842-0201, 843-8292/8830 or 871-2275 (fax).

LECTURE. Powerbooks and E Entrepreneur Magazine bring you "Be Your Own Boss! Entrepreneurship as an Alternative" on March 20, 6-8 p.m. at Powerbooks Arnaiz. Butz Bartolome, president of GMB Franchise Developers, will guide you on how to be an entrepreneur and create your own fortune. The lecture is part of a series on careers dubbed "The Real-Life Guide to Careers 2002."

ANNUAL FAIR. Furniture-makers from all over the country feature the latest designs, colors and materials in furniture and furnishing in the 9th Annual Furniture, Furnishings and Fashion Festival, which ends today, at the Centermall, Greenhills Shopping Center.

Meanwhile, Interested parties for the 1st Garden and Pet Show, which will be held today until April 7, can call Albert Castro and Celina Umali at 820-3862, 826-8162, 826-6732, 829-3165; fax (0632)820-3863; or visit them at G/F, Blue Mens Building, 707 Urduja St., Brgy. Village, Sucat Rd., Parañaque City.

SALE. Araneta Center celebrates Binibining Pilipinas 2002 this month with "Pretty Woman Centerwide Sale" today until March 17. Fifty-percent discounts on selected items will be given by participating stores in All Mall, Farmers Plaza, Fiesta Carnival, Araneta Coliseum, Farmers Market, SM, Rustan's, Farmers Garden, National Bookstore, COD, Isetann, Fairmart and Marikina ShoeExpo.

Convenience shopping at low prices

AFTER THE SUCCESS of its first two stores at Fort Bonifacio Global City and Ortigas Extension, S&R Price Membership Shopping opens its third warehouse today at Ramon Magsaysay, Congressional Avenue, Bago Bantay, QC.

Shoppers can find everything for their home and office needs—from food to grocery items to beauty products to toys to home décor to kitchenware. There's S&R Price's food service that offers New York-style pizzas, calzone, all-meat beef hotdogs and drink-all-you-can sodas.

S&R Price carries many items not usually found in other stores like Mrs. Fields Cookies in packs, Charmin' toilet paper, Homedics foot spa and hard-to-find Oil of Olay products. For kids, there are Barbie dolls and Crayola sets.

The 5,000-sq m warehouse is large, clean and brightly lit. Inside, shoppers will find grocery items, fresh beef and lamb, poultry, fish, pork, fresh produce, frozen foods, deli items, health and beauty aids, clothing, business supplies and electronics all neatly stacked in huge shelves. Value-added services include a one-hour photo shop, tire center, bank, optical shop, fresh bakery and rotisserie chicken.

Call 929-8888 and 925-9957.

New training for dance, theater introduced

JULIE Borromeo's Performing Arts Foundation is introducing "Theater Floor—Barre Vocalize," a new form of academic training for dance and musical theater, this summer.

Classical ballet students will do barre exercises on the floor. Musical theater students will do singing vocalizations while stretching and working out.

Developed by the school, the program started with the idea to bring the body into a well-centered placement using floor exercises. With this new technique, the body will achieve strength, better balance and improved freedom of movement.

The floor exercise teaching method of New York's Zena Romett Floor Barre advanced the Borromeo technique and introduced a system that further enhanced the growth of dance and musical theater education in the country.

Other factors and disciplines such as the Russian Buteyko and other breathing techniques, international vocal styles, acting methods and improvisation exercises, dance and movement disciplines, contributed to the development of the Borromeo "Theater Floor-Barre Vocalize" class.

The Summer Workshop starts April 1 and will offer courses in classical ballet, jazz, tap, flamenco, ballroom and musical theater.

It will culminate in a performance at the Meralco Theater on May 31.

Call 724-3476 and 727-5651.

CHILDREN'S intermediate jazz: Jerene (left), Marie (center) and Recie (right) with male scholars Jake (left), Rico (center) and Rolly (rolly)

Summer dance workshop begins April 1

ACADEMY One Music and Dance Center will have its annual summer workshop intensive April 1- May 11.

Culminating activities will include a recital at the main theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines and an open house for the parents.

This year's summer program will also offer jazz classes under Julie Alante, formerly of Powerdance.

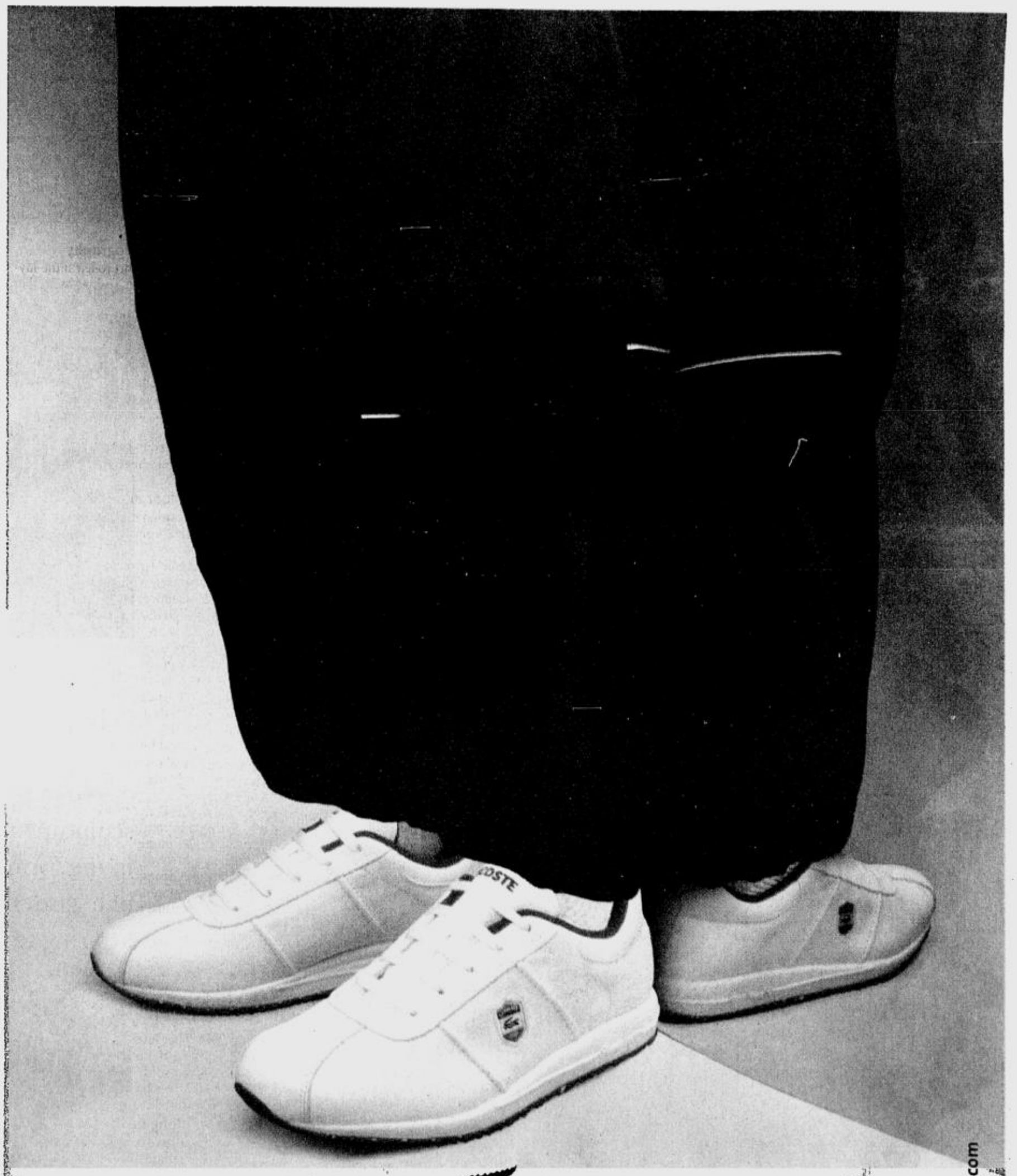
Founded in 1993, Academy One offers classical ballet for all levels from beginners to pre-professional. Its directress, Cherish Garcia-Hernandez, is a fully registered teacher of the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD), London and the Australian Conservatoire of Ballet.

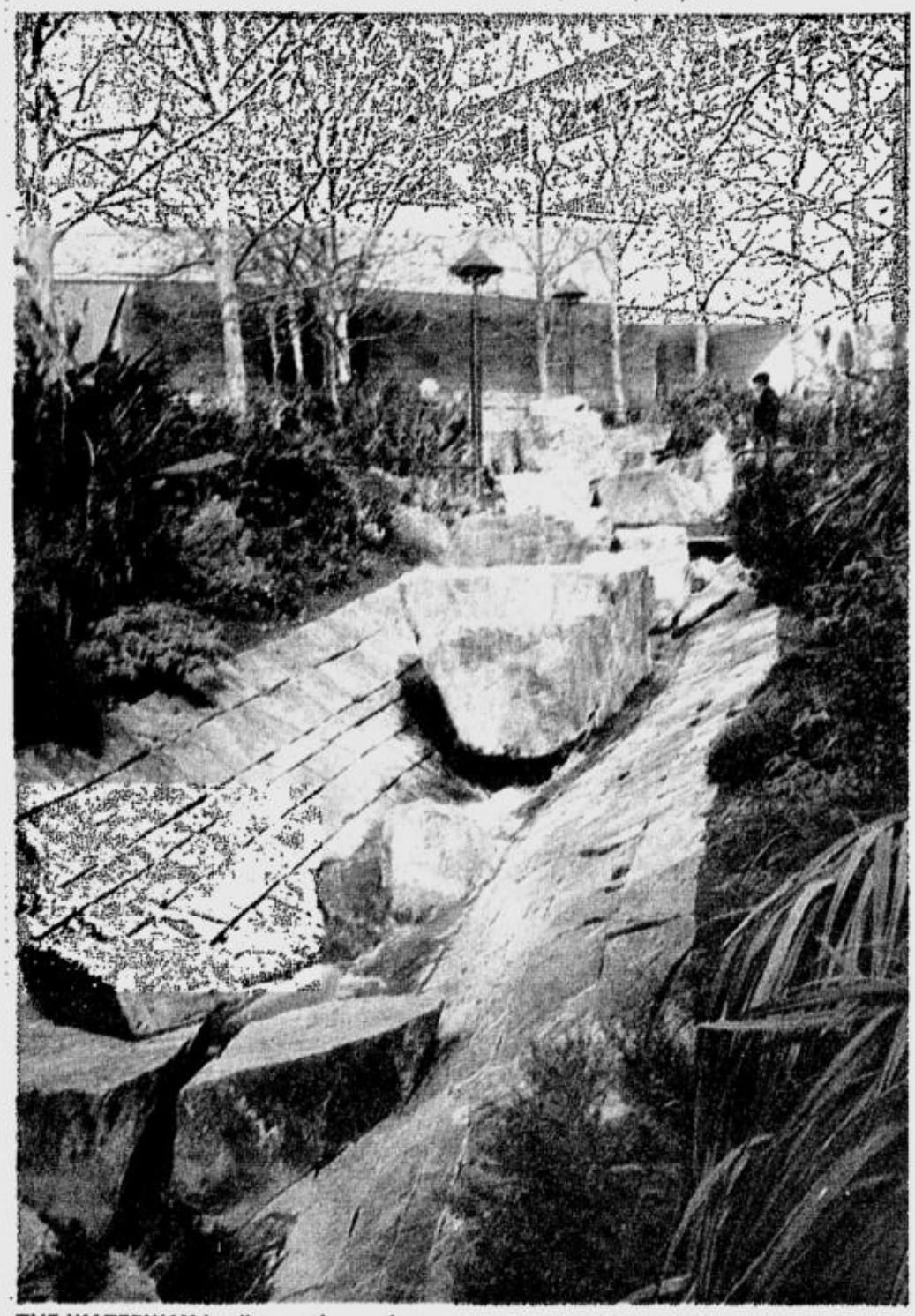
Students of the school have won scholarships to various international ballet workshops like the RAD summer workshop in Hong Kong and Dance Aspen in the United States. Graduates have joined major local ballet companies like Ballet Manila, Ballet Philippines and Philippine Ballet Theater or been accepted to dance programs of the University of the Philippines College of Music, College of St. Benilde and the Philippine High School for the Arts.

Academy One is the only dance studio in the country with a Harlequin Allegro floor, used by major ballet companies all over the world. The studio is fully air-conditioned. Each class has a maximum of 20 students.

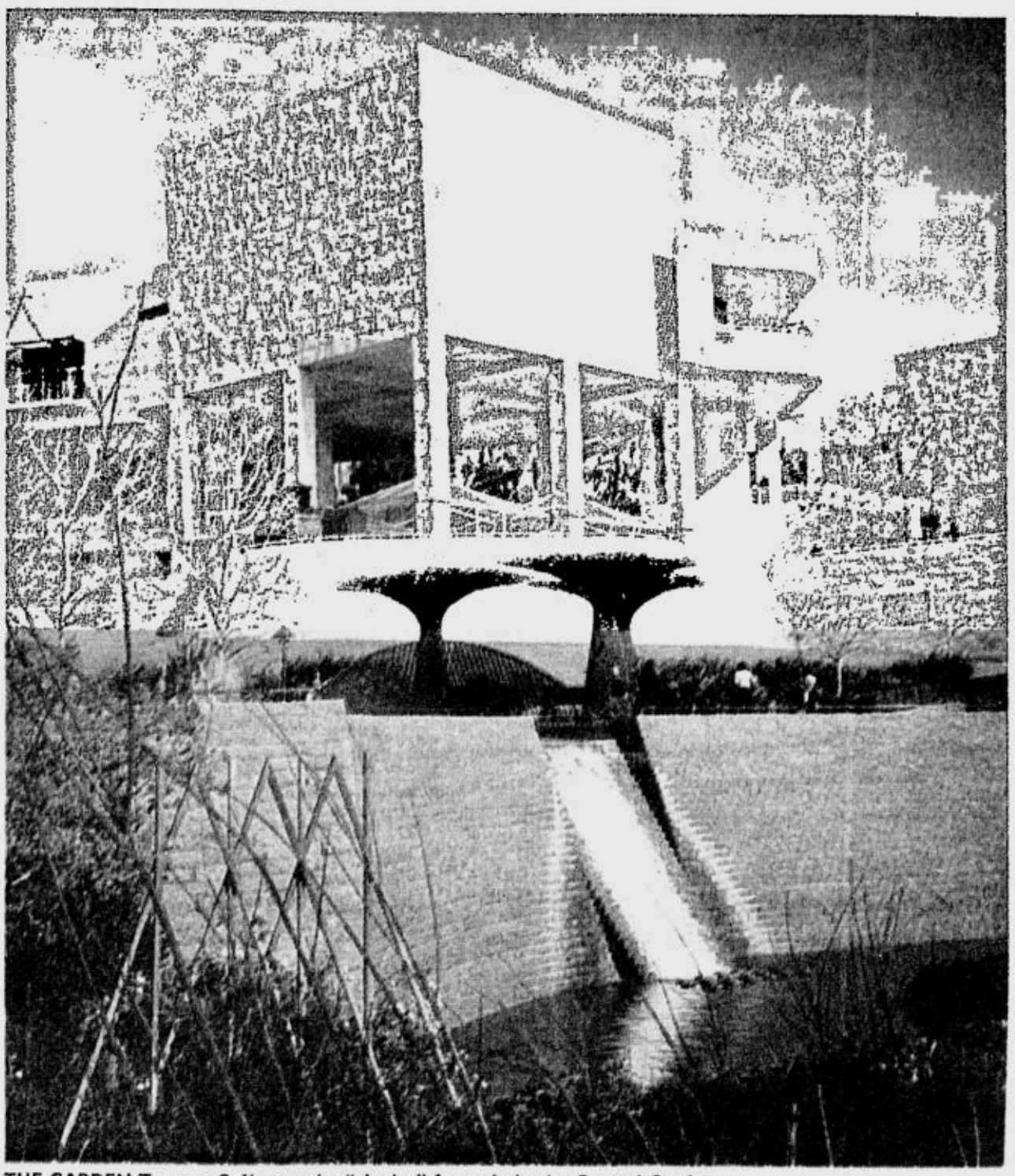
The music department under the direction of Joonee Garcia, a graduate of the UP College of Music, offers piano, voice and guitar lessons. Garcia, who took special courses from Music Together (a program that specializes in music and movement for children) in Princeton University, also handles the pre-ballet music and movement class for toddlers.

Academy One is at 293 Aguirre Ave. corner Gov. Santos St., B.F. Homes, Parañaque. Call 826-5182, 820-6622, or (0917)2461161.





THE WATERWAY leading to the pool



THE GARDEN Terrace Café over the "chadar" fountain in the Central Garden

J. Paul Getty Center's monument in leaf and stone

From page D1

THE SOUTH Promontory Cactus Garden (nature imitating architecture)

lion could come up with.

The Center is composed of six buildings interconnected by underground and aboveground structures designed by architect Richard Meier to create a natural and cultural highlight in the city. It is an imposing structure when seen from the 405 Freeway. The splendor does not in any way diminish as you approach the building. On the contrary, it is underscored by the many details that astonish the visitor. The travertine cladding, which is visible from the freeway, is individually hinged to the structure as a safeguard against earthquakes. It had been quarried from the Bagni di Tivoli, near Rome. It is also the same travertine used in Saint Peter's Basilica.

Central garden

We wait for our guide at the arrival plaza, where dozens of people spew out from the electronic trams that bring the visitors up from the parking levels. It is interesting to note that admission is completely free. But you pay for the parking.

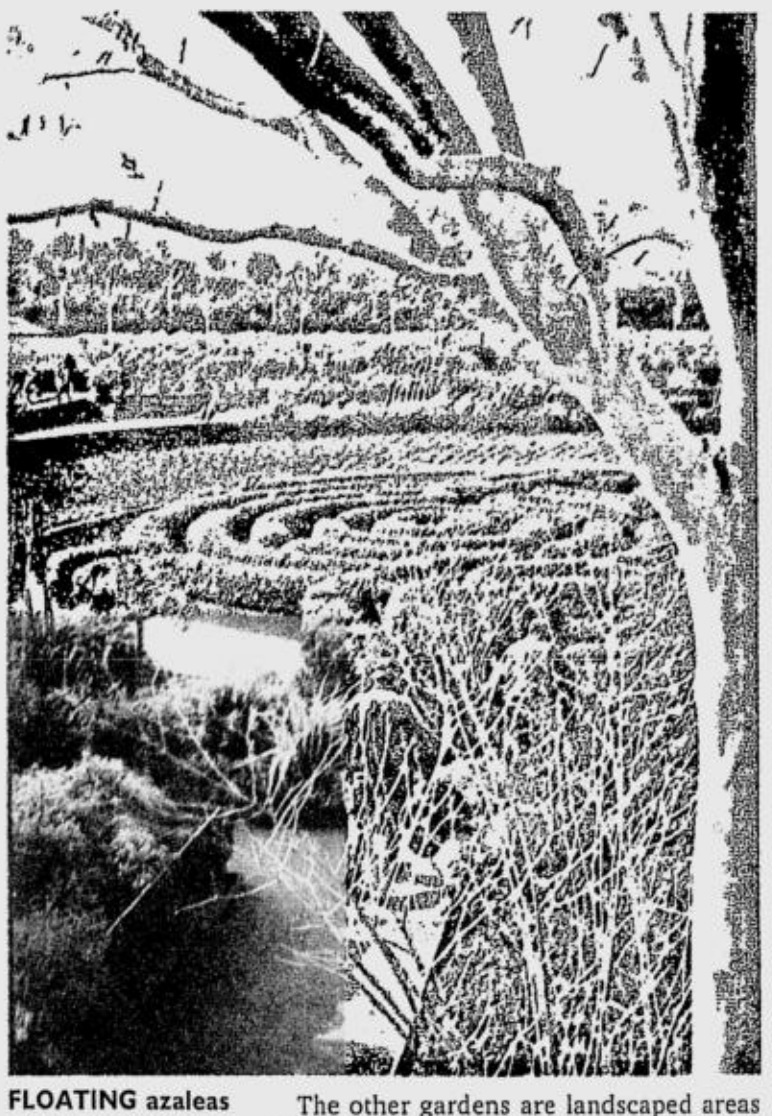
Our guide arrives and takes us on a tour of the central garden created by the artist Robert Irwin who called it "a sculpture in the form of a garden aspiring to be art." Our tour begins on a zigzag path that runs along a waterway. Every time you approach the water from the path, you hear the different sounds the water makes as it rolls down the main pool. Stones are positioned to obstruct the water in its progress, thus giving off the myriad sounds of an aquatic orchestra.

Sycamore trees that are now leafless also hedge the path. Irwin chose these in particular for their attractive winter appearance. The lower plantings are constantly changed as the seasons come and go. The base of the walkway marks the entrance to the garden, which is highlighted by six towering bowers made of steel re-bars treated and painted to look like rusting metal. They are planted to three varieties of bougainvillea waiting to spill their flowery guts on us.

The garden is a circular path revolving around a pool designed with a floating maze of azaleas. The plantings revolve around themes of light, color and reflections, with lots of deer-repelling plants as there are some deer residing in the property itself. On the south of the garden you can take in expansive views of the LA skyline, or look back into the Center from one of the focal points.

Landscape

The Center's waterway system is explained by our next guide, who introduces us to the building's *Amphorae,* a feature that is incredible in its concept and function. It is a tribute to water as the source of life. We are also informed that the dead leaves carried away by the water systems all end up in a huge mechanical leaf-grinder. The refuse is used to make mulching and compost while recycling the water for the Center's varying needs.



FLOATING azaleas make the most interesting maze.

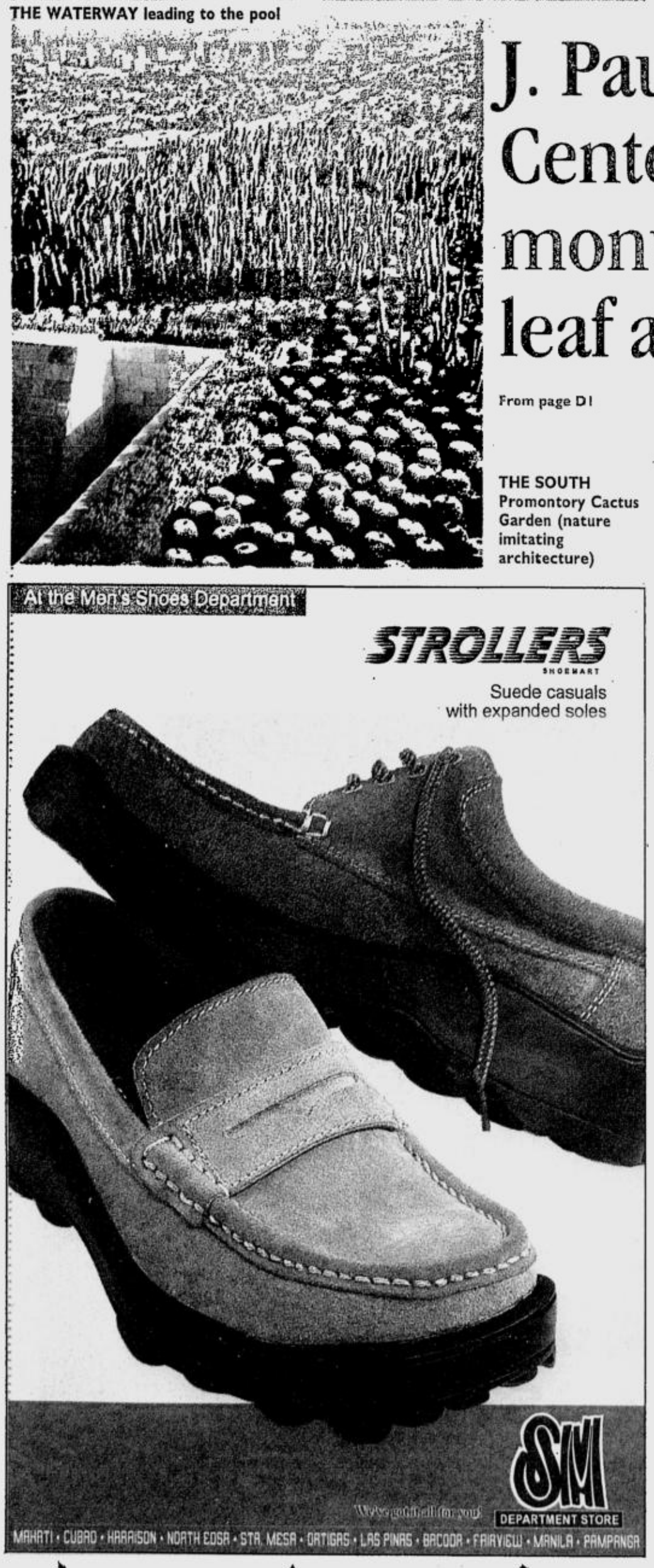
Robert Irwin called it 'a sculpture in the form of a garden aspiring to be art'

The other gardens are landscaped areas around the hillsides and inside the building itself. In the north wing of the building, we are introduced to *chaparelle* and the California Oak, a fire-resistant tree which is naturally found within the 110-acre property. About 8,000 additional oak trees have been planted to protect the Center from bushfire, in observance of federal regulations.

We walk through the Museum entrance and the alley of Montezuma pine trees. We admire the camphor trees planted among rocks that were shipped from Columbia. Even the miniscule Corsica mint that had been planted as foil for the paving stones is not to be missed. On the southern side is a cactus garden, which is planted to barrel, column cacti, agaves and euphorbias, mimicking the skyscrapers beyond.

E-mail the author at campoman@yahoo.com

THE BOUGAINVILLEA arbors



How to tell if it is true love

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I'm a third year high school student here in Iloilo City. May I pour out some questions on how to deal with or act on a "first commitment"?

How do you know if a person loves you, or "*may pagtingin siya*"? Is it good for me to make the first move, to let him know that I love him? Are there limitations for the guy when it comes to his friends or best friends? How often should a sincere "I love you" be said? How should a girl sustain her boyfriend's interest if ever "*sila na*"? How will you know if the guy who is courting you is really sincere and really loves you?

MIME

Your questions need simple answers but, of course, you have to use your mind and good judgment in figuring out the real score.

A young man really loves you when he is very considerate and thoughtful, and shows he prefers your company during free time. It is never good for a girl to be flirty, to make the first move to show that she cares. It just might make him lose interest, because boys prefer to do the courting. It will please him to know his efforts have paid off.

If a girl is the first to show interest and he responds, it could be that he just wants to enjoy the attention, and there's nobody yet that has captured his fancy.

There are no limitations on his dealings with his friends. You can't stop him from joining a group that likes to shoot darts, for instance, or he might be a member of a civic club with both boys and girls. Of course, if you see him hooked on shabu, it is time to report him.

When you talk on the phone, you can say "I love you" at the end of a serious discussion. If your question refers to how often he should say it to you, there is no rule. What is more important is to remember that action speaks louder than words. If he is thoughtful, opens doors for you, attends to your needs and is always there to help you, then you can be sure he cares for you.

Be gracious, a good listener and an interesting conversationalist. You will know he sincerely loves you if he always gives you his full attention. However, if he is a good student, don't expect him to always talk to you since he has to attend to his lessons and homework. If you see him talking to other girls, it does not always mean he will court them also. They may be his classmates and they are discussing matters concerning school activities.

Keep in mind, however, that you are only in high school. You still have a lot to do before you go to college. Between the mind and the heart, your mind deserves priority attention.

Readers may want to write you, so I am giving your full name and address since you did not ask me to withhold them: Mary Lei, Colegio de San Jose, Lopez Street, Iloilo City 5000.

* * *

Addendum: For the information of collectors who want to sell old coins, the exact address of Albino Quiban Jr. is BNSP, 1184-F A. Mabini, Ermita, Manila, tel. 524-0548 and e-mail bnsp@pacific.net.ph. He is an active member of the Bank Notes Society of the Philippines as well as of the Numismatic Society of the Phils. A former president of both organizations, his office has all the information about coins and paper money.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

'Summer Daze' offers best installment deals

BPI Card, the undisputed leader in consumer financing, holds its 27th Installment Madness until March 24 at Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City.

Dubbed "Hot Summer Daze," the installment madness offers the best deals including the 0-percent interest promo on high-ticket items by participating merchants.

The "Hot Summer Daze" event is happening simultaneously with the "Charge-All Promo," which allows cardholders to transfer and convert to S.I.P. (Special Installment Plan) other credit card and cash transactions at stores within the Glorietta malls worth a minimum accumulated amount of P3,000.

Participating at "Hot Summer Daze" are Aiwa, American Home, Ariston, Concepcion-Carrier, Elba, Fedders, General Electric, Haier, JVC, Kolin, Konka, La Germania, LG Collins, Midea, National Panasonic, Philips, Pioneer, Sharp, Sony, Whirlpool.

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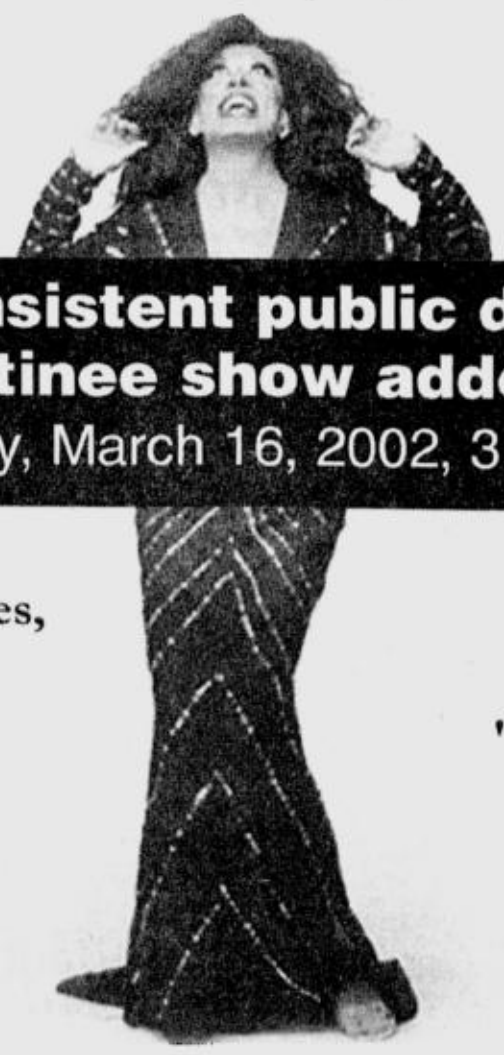

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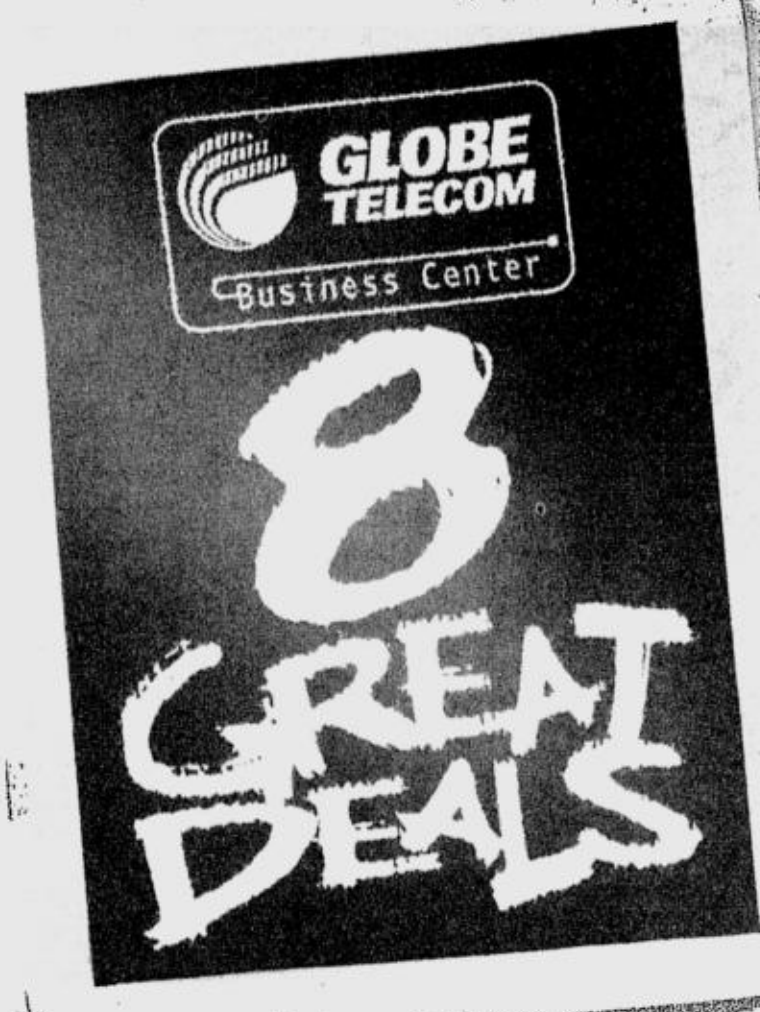

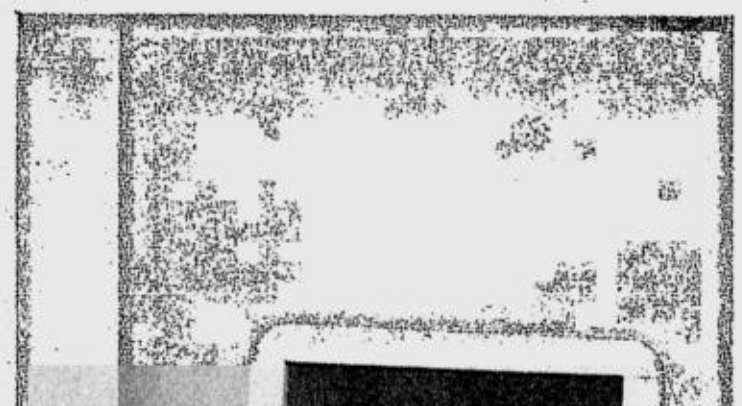

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LIFESTYLE

trend potting

Circle of time

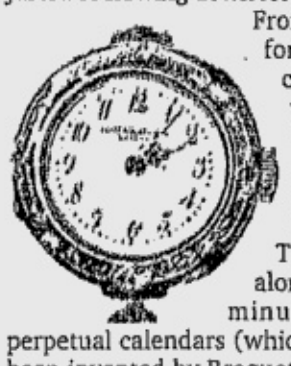
From antique horology to fashion, novelty and space-age watches, the history of the timepiece is the history of time itself

By Bea P. Valdes
Contributor
Photos by Patrick uy
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ANTONIO SALAC SANTOS

IN THE BEGINNING, time had no voice. It was mapped out as light's arc traveled across a day. It was a shifting silhouette. Sundials chronicled time's passage through shadows. Time threw out its shape, slowly seeping into the ground, creeping against the dust. It would stretch its fingers long in the morning, then clutch noon tight in parallel orbit with the earth, and finally relax languidly at the end of the day, yawning and stealing into the dark.

Time was catalogued in stages of hunger, when the body was regulated by the rumblings of the stomach. Man plotted points for the physical: breakfast time to lunchtime to dinnertime. The shape of time came from the Catholic narrative; time's structure was in the waterlogged ringing of church bells. It found a collective expression, set the occasion to pray, to collect under the cool of the churches eaves. In households, it tumbled into the somber bonging of a grandfather clock.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, mathematics, physics, optics and clock making were regarded as arts. Abraham Louis Breguet is considered one of the most stellar horologers of all time. Numerous inventions and innovations are credited to him. His automatic watch was accurate within a 10th of a second and had the capacity to run without being adjusted or slowing down for at least eight years.



From the Greek words for time and writing, chronographs are watches that can measure time in different ways, like days and date and moon phases. These chronographs, along with tourbillion, minute repeaters and perpetual calendars (which it is said to have been invented by Breguet, a fact sometimes disputed) are all incorporated into his Grand Complication watches.

Time doesn't wait

Another story tells that Breguet was commissioned by Marie-Antoinette to make such a piece for her. But the fact that time waits for no one is one of life's own grand complications. Breguet finished the piece only after the Queen's decapitation.

In the early 19th century, nursing mothers began stringing their pendant watches on their wrists. This informal trend of wearing wristwatches was born from the annoyance of their children's incessant tugging at the chains of their dangling pendant watches. (Blaise Pascal, the French mathematician and philosopher, was noted to strap on his pocket watch to his wrist in the mid-17th century.)

According to Christie's, in 1870, the first wristwatch was created for a Hungarian baroness. Timekeeping then was just another excuse to flaunt a precious pendant or a fancy bracelet; another game to be played by the wealthy elite. Watches were made with jeweled movements. In these miniature ideals of perpetual motion, the most efficient way to avoid wear was to use ruby bearings and anchors. "17 rubies" or "21 rubies" are still inscribed on older models.

World War I helped usher in the current use of wristwatches. For soldiers, it was crucial knowing what time to attack or retreat. Pocket watches, which were the style of the day, proved to be cumbersome, as they had to be hidden and pulled out to check the time. In-

CIRCLE/ p.E2

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1/2 cup	carrots
1/2 cup	green peas
1/2 cup	tomato paste
1/2 kilo	rice, washed
2	7 g. packs MAGGI Flavor-it Shrimp Powder
1	green or red bell pepper cut into strips
	saffron (optional)
	Chorizo Bilbao
	Hard-boiled eggs

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Heat olive oil. Add the ingredients one at the time in the order they are mentioned. Allow the shellfish to simmer in its own juices. Add tomato paste. Stir to blend well. Cook rice with MAGGI Flavor-It Shrimp Powder. Add rice to the seafood mixture and blend well. Add bell peppers. Garnish with Chorizo Bilbao & hard-boiled eggs. Serves 6.

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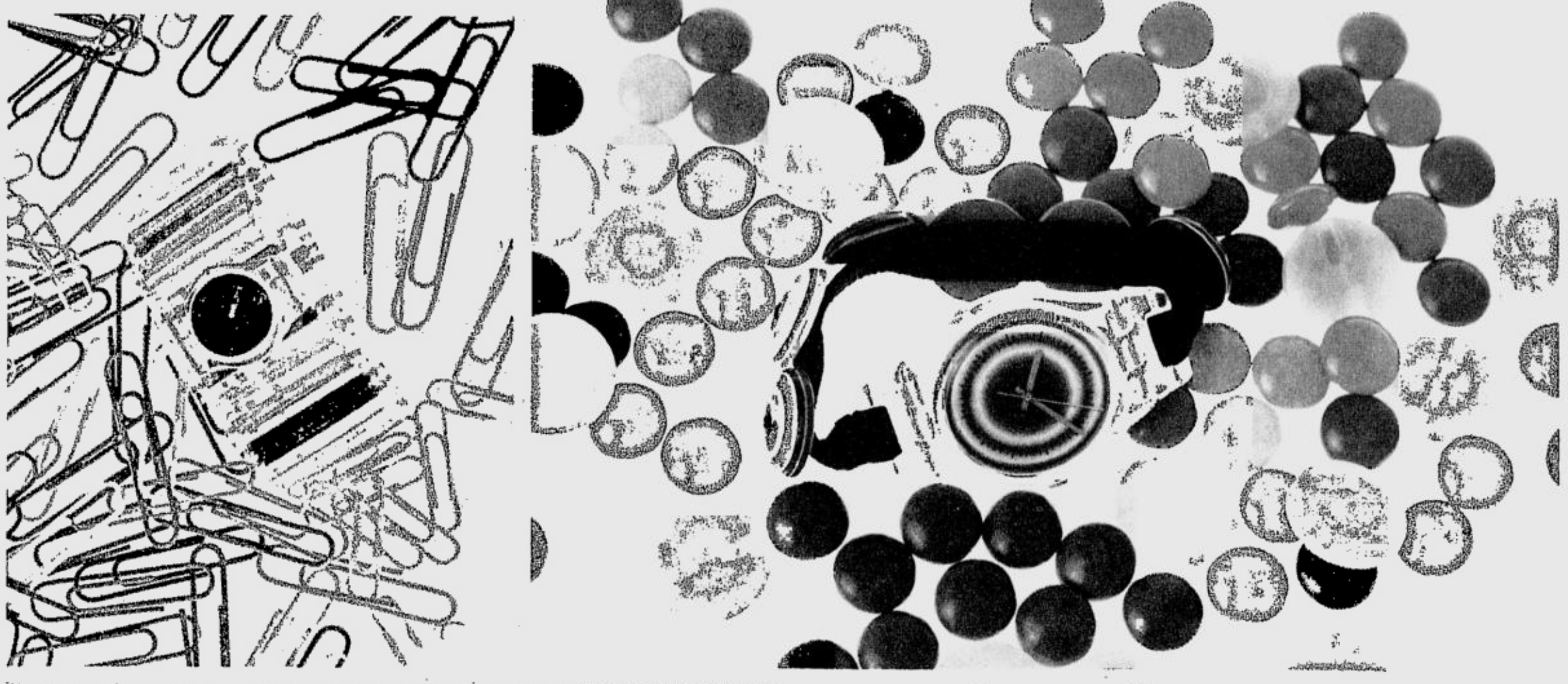
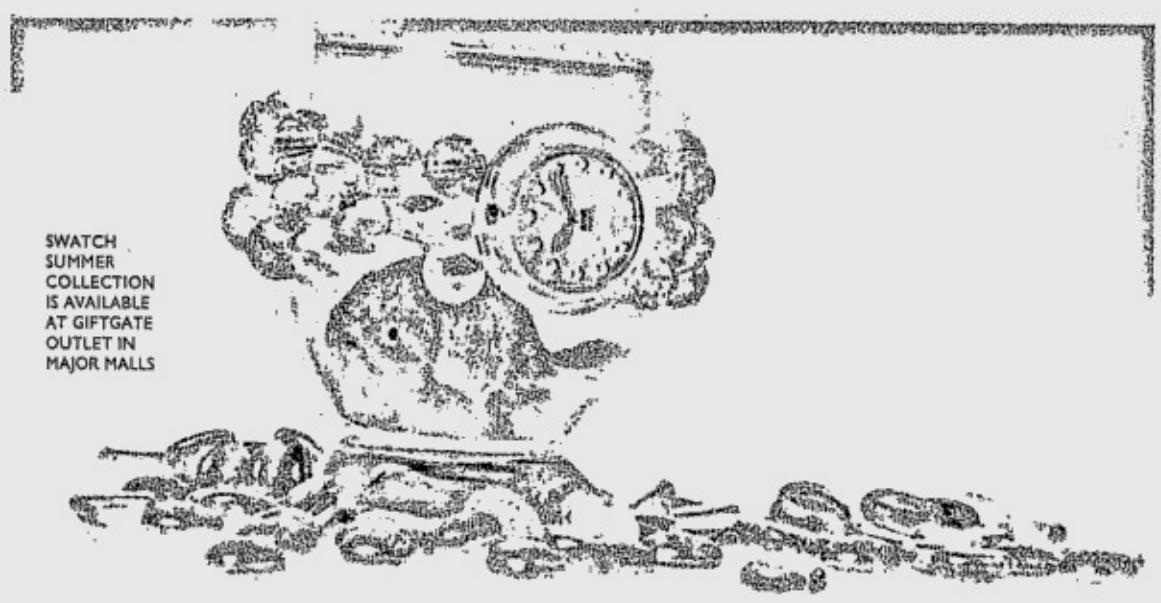




SWATCH SUMMER COLLECTION IS AVAILABLE AT GIFTGATE OUTLET IN MAJOR MALLS

Circle of time

From page E1

stead, new models were secured on the wrist for easy and efficient access.

To battle against the exposed vulnerability of wristwatches, the early pieces had a protective grid on top of the face. Also, since many operations and maneuvers were carried out at night, the illumination of dials (using radium) on a black face proved indispensable. The circumstances of war also hastened the innovation of watertight and shock-absorbing systems.

The war also set the stage for modern designer's watches. As a "tribute to the Allied tanks that helped defend France during World War I," Louis Cartier created a "Spartan and dynamic" watch, the Cartier Tank. Before this, only bejeweled timepieces were associated with formal elegance. Now, this streamlined piece, functional and accessible, gave way to a new aesthetic incorporating design innovations, which had anything but arbitrary roots.

Novelty

Since then, fine watches had given way to the novelty of fashion watches. The earlier delicate small-faced models, evolved into larger and thinner faces. From the iconic impact of the Duchess of Windsor to Jackie O, a veritable cocktail of styles, materials and colors emerged. Timepieces became accessories made to match outfits and time of day, from Piaget's Slave cuffs to Chopard's Happy Diamonds. Whimsy is satisfied with tiny bracelets with interchangeable straps and bezels.

True till today, Christian Bedat says of his pink croc-strapped piece: "It adds a dash of youth and sophistication. And you can always change your strap to change your mood." Quartz movement helped install the democracy of the Swatch. Contemporary fashion designers offer a range of timepieces to complement their whole look. The options are packaged as infinite too, as Patek Philippe's Advert asks: "Who will you be in the next 24 hours?" The array suits not only mood, but also mode. Designs, from the ridiculous to the sublime, accompany prices affordable to the obnoxious.

There is a variety of pieces to tell time with, but sometimes we still forget. French playwright Jean-Claude Carriere explains that "young people have lost all sense of the past, they are apostles of the immediate" (which, he points out, has the word Media in it).

In the realm of pop culture Omega is to James Bond. In the annals of history, it holds a more prestigious place. Neil Armstrong wore the Omega Speedmaster on July 21. 1969. It now has the inscriptions: "First watch worn on the moon" and "flight qualified by Nasa for all manned space missions." But more important, the timepiece proved vital in 1970, on the Apollo 13 Mission. After a series of explosions on board, "a number of important instruments went out of order. There was no contact possible with flight control and the astronauts had to calculate and time the return into the atmosphere. An error of a few seconds could have been fatal."

Omega has received the highest performance honor given by Nasa, fondly referred to as the "Snoopy Award."

Time's true measure

Moshe Agashi, an Indian child psychiatrist, famous film actor and director of a film school at Poona expounds on digital watches:

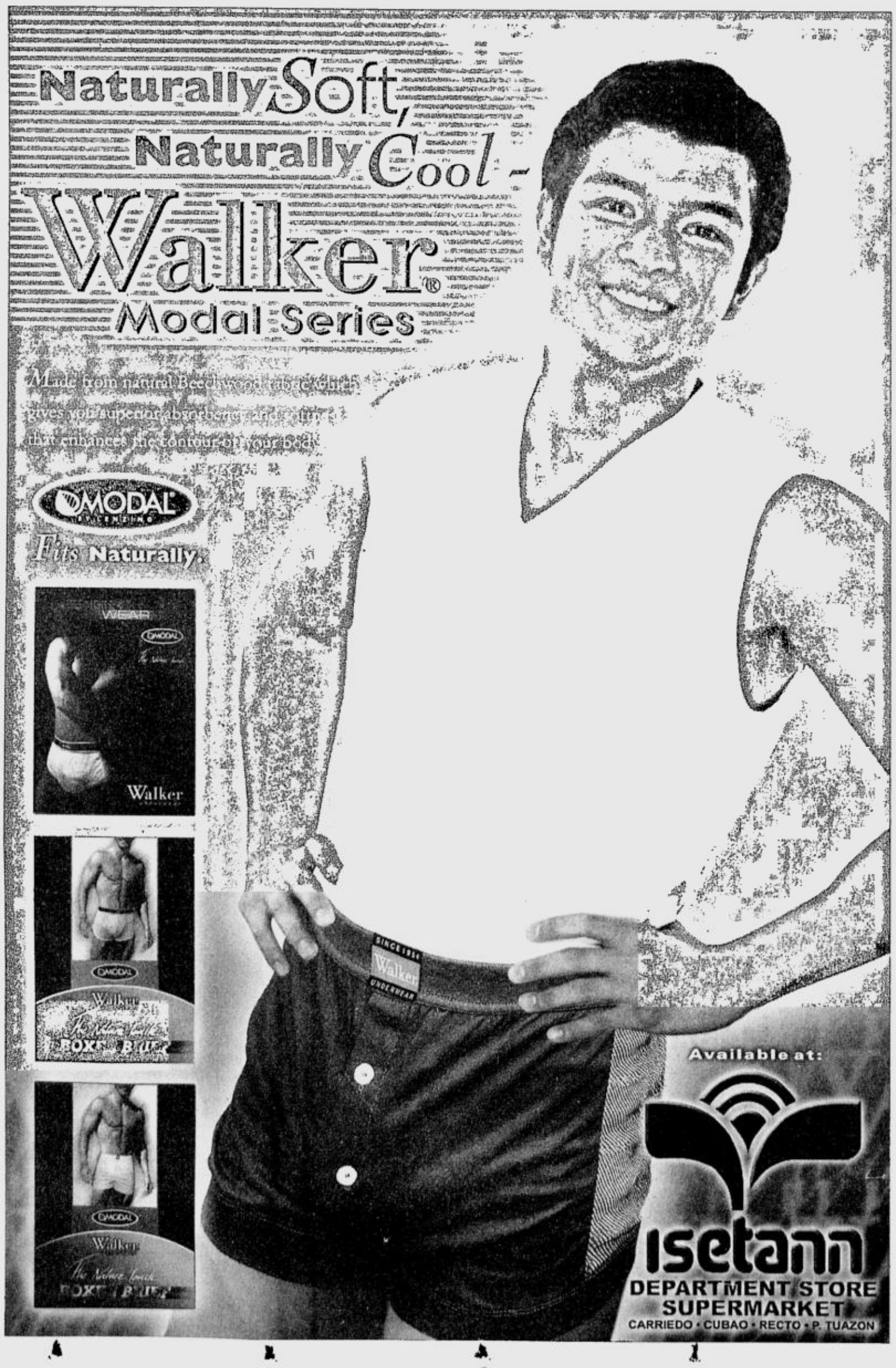
"When you look at a watch dial for time, that time is situated within a circle of time. You immediately recall what you have done in the course of a day, where you were this morning, what time it was when you bumped into a friend, you remember when dusk is going to fall, and you see what time is left before bedtime, when you go to bed sure in the knowledge of another day well spent, and with the certainty also on the following day time will resume its daily course around your watch. If all you have got is a little rectangle, you have to live life as a series of moments, and you lose all true measure of time."

Digital flashes what time it is, but not what time it isn't. This might explain further the GenX's bemoaning of recent nostalgia: "Things were so much better last week."

Time was once measured in the ripening curve of a day. We used to look up to the sky and squint, and gauge without precision, the time it felt like. Now with severe clarity, we know the exact time to the tenth of a second. Even our bodies yield to its pace, as it is advised not to place a ticking alarm clock by one's bedside as our own pulse quickens to match its beat. And that does not bode well, if we are to believe the "watchmaker's secret."

At the close of the 17th century, as whispers go, watchmakers conspired to adjust the tempo of ticking, progressively accelerating the beat from century to century, changing the rhythm of reading time. If this curse is true, then, the nervous tick of our timepieces binds us to its seemingly faster flight. Time endures infinitely, yet paradoxically escaping from us, perpetually splitting into past and future adventures. Strapped on, in a perfect pulse, time now buzzes constantly, turning us into bees, changing the velocity of our lives.

E-mail the author at baileys_crayon@yahoo.com



CARL takes center stage in his white trubenized top with a bowtie and black pants.

March in style

LITTLE girls are pretty and pristine in white dresses with delicate lace, dainty floral embroidery and appliqués, flowing ribbons and bows. Little boys, on the other hand, are smart in embroidered organza *barongs* and crisp white trubenized shirts worn with black pants.

Be glad and grad in SM's graduation collection available at the Children's Wear Department of all SM stores.

Vidal Sassoon presents summer hair fashion

WELLA, one of the world's biggest manufacturers of hair cosmetics, will present the Spring/Summer 2002 Collection of Vidal Sassoon, UK on March 18 at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati.

The Vidal Sassoon Salons and Schools Team, composed of senior creative director Bruce Masefield, creative director Darren Newton and senior stylist Julianne O'Brien, will show new hair fashions using Wella's Koleston Perfect and Color Touch.

The latest collection is inspired by three themes: Black Tie, a take on Yves St. Laurent's Le Smoking, where hair length is long, texture is straight and sleek, and colors are in cool blonde tones such as platinum, shell and silver.

Shadow is influenced by the pioneering fashion sensibility of Japanese high-fashion designers, when they layer, drape and wrap the body, ignoring the usual accentuation points. Panels of golden blondes and deep browns are applied into a curved hair shape with long extended pieces. This look is heavy on asymmetry, contraction and disconnection.

Maverick is a look that mixes global multiracial styles with gender experimentation to create a new tribe. The hair is carved and sculpted into interesting shapes and patterns.

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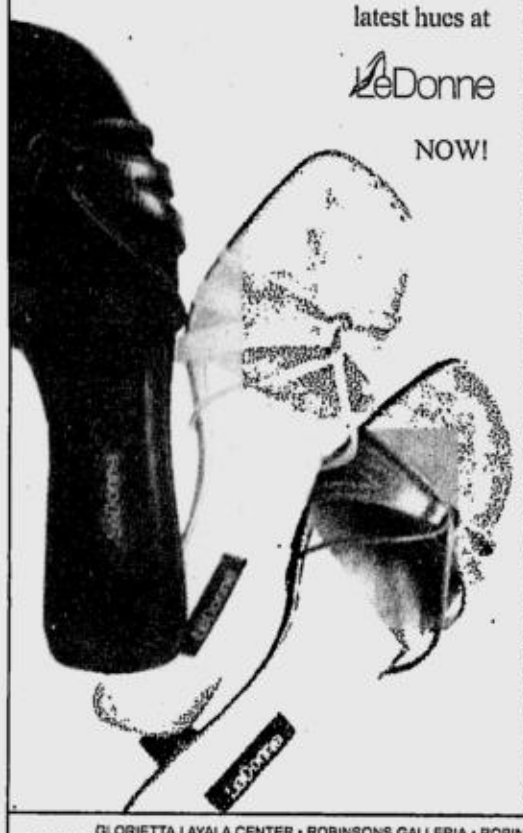

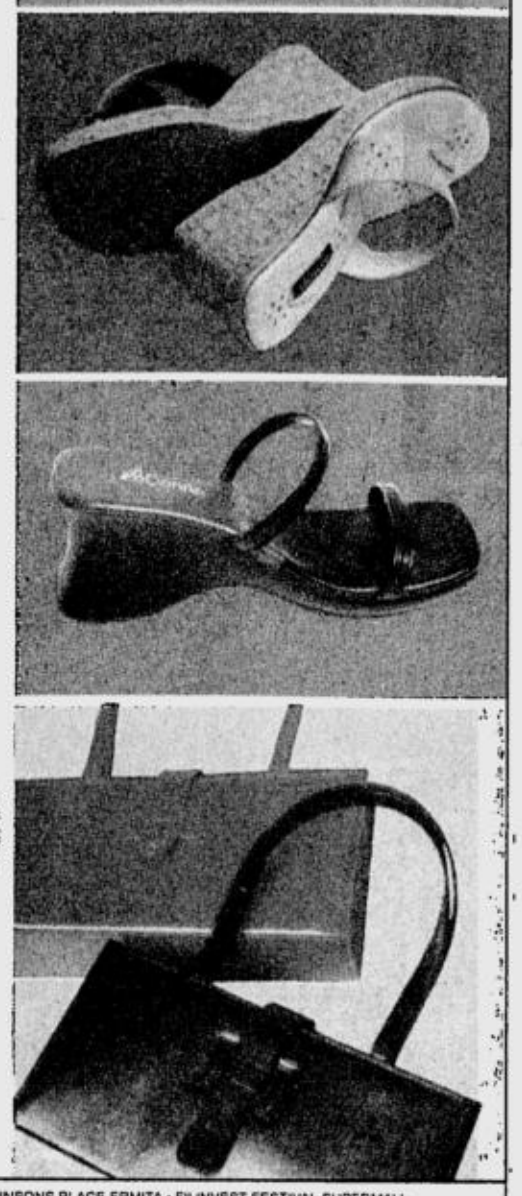

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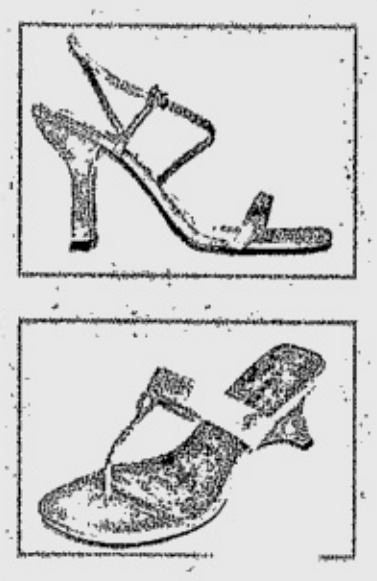
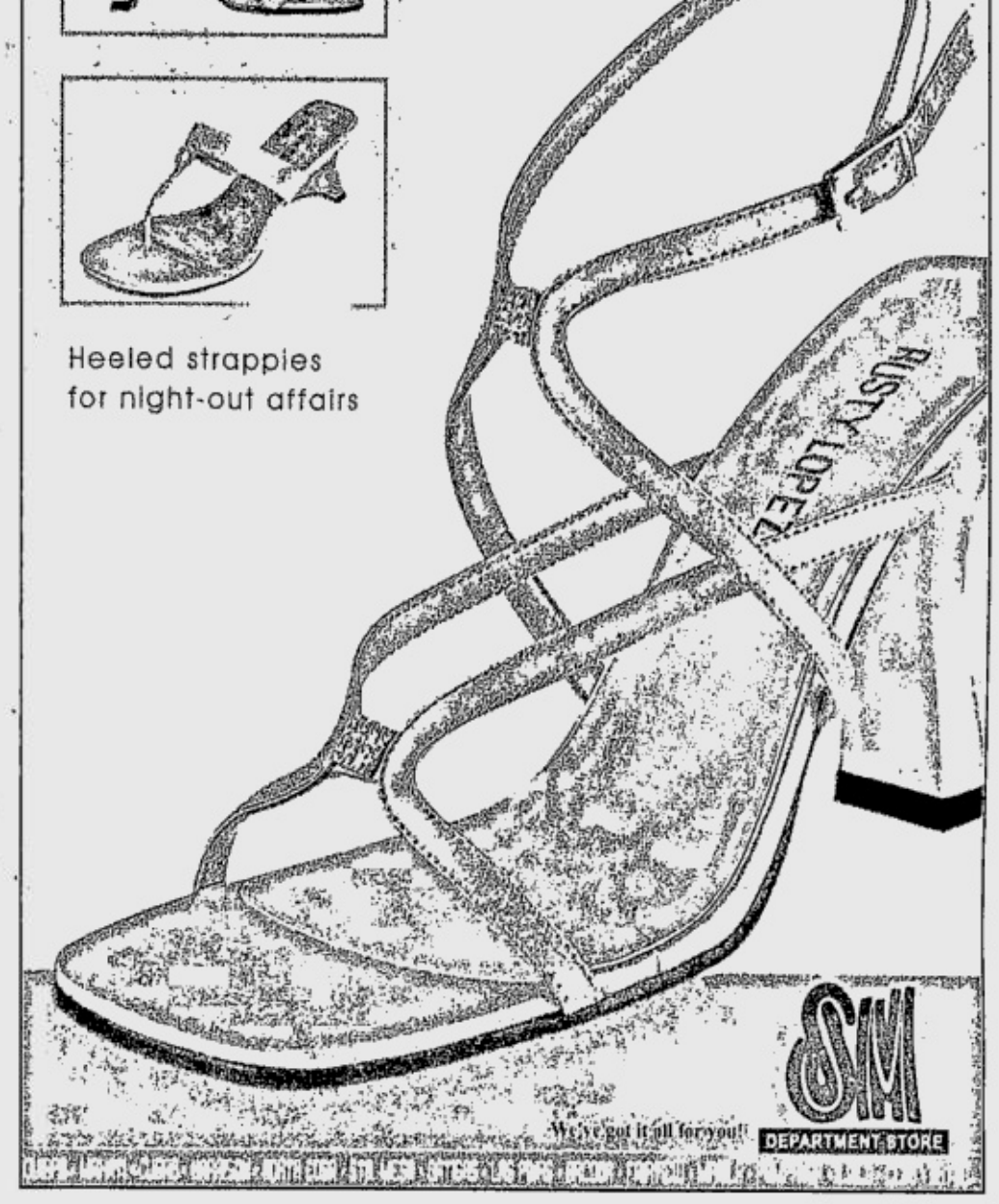


Heeled strappies for night-out affairs



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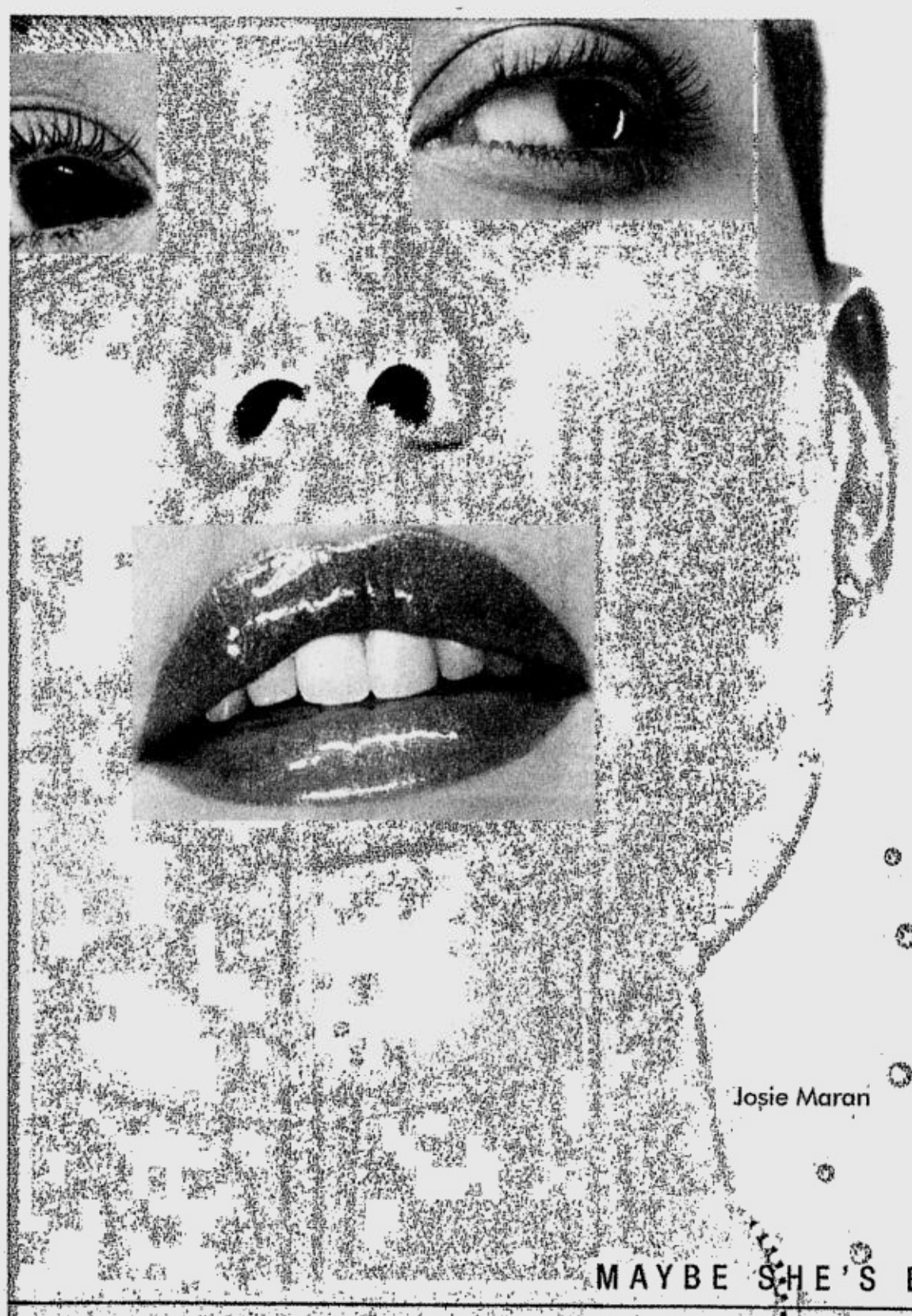

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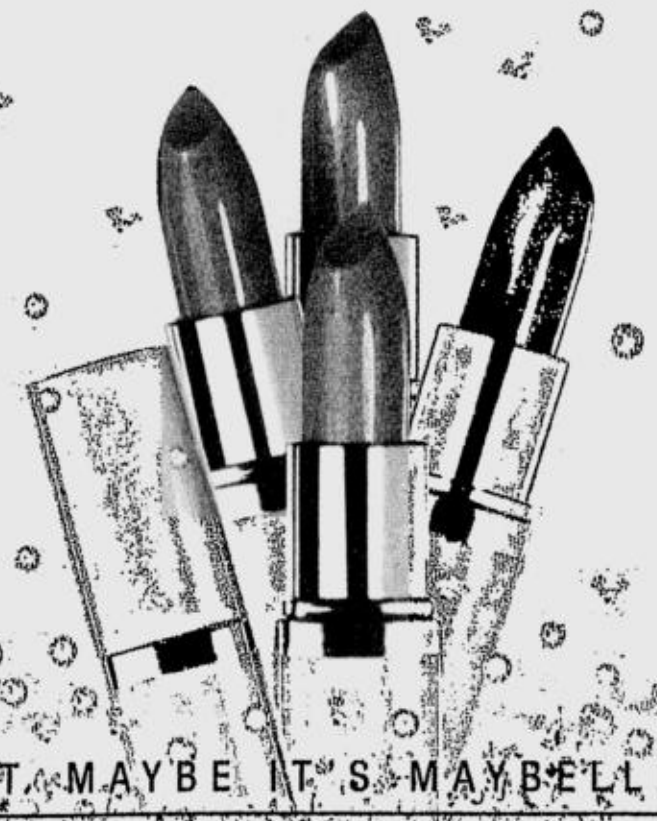

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From celestial bodies to black holes

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Roger Carpio

PREDICTABLY, the awards season has begun on a lackluster note with celebrities slipping either in boring or appalling outfits at the recent Star Awards. Leading our cast of oddities was the trio of Ara Mina, Patricia Javier and Janna Victoria, who failed to sizzle in their respective red outfits by Fanny Serrano.

There's a fine line between titillating the audience and tickling their funny bones, and the three breached this line last Saturday. Janna, the evening's most pathetic fashion victim, looked like a human spool with a ball of tulle wound every which way around her hips.

Ara fared better in a semi-beaded red corset accented with feathers. Still, no star in her right mind would probably be caught dead wearing that. With or without the flimsy, irregularly cut cape, Patricia's outfit didn't exactly flatter her figure.

ROSANNA Roces' anti-piracy statement rings false.

JUDY Ann Santos plays it safe.

Fashion at the Star Awards was mainly for show—and what a tacky show!

Ramona Rivilla wore a two-piece, genie-inspired halter that conjured nightmares instead of dreams. What about fellow bold star Aya Medel? Did she or didn't she wear undies? Well, with or without one, it really didn't matter: her white, knitted gown looked more like a table runner that had seen better days. Klaudia Koronel fared no better in a Greek-inspired cutout that draped her pair of Mt. Olympus.

Sharon Cuneta tapped veteran designer Joe Salazar to do a gown in black silk chiffon. Swarovski beads accented the first layer, a one-shoulder gown also made of the same material.

A slimmer Judy Ann Santos tried to play it safe in a contrasting number: a black corset paired with a corn-yellow A-line skirt. By eschewing Santacruzan frills, the young star succeeded in drawing attention to her face. The gown was far from exceptional, but at least it was a start.

Best Supporting Actor nominee Jeffrey Quizon, in keeping with his gay character in "Bakit Di Totohanin," sported Goldilocks curls and a suit with interesting satin accents on the collar and edges. Melanie Marquez, with nth husband Adam Lawyer, made a dramatic entrance in a strapless black corset with a built-in *alampay*. Despite the years, the former beauty queen hadn't lost her touch.

Rosanna Roces made a stand against intellectual piracy in Maxie Cinco's CD-studded miniskirt, but the idea behind the outfit itself was far from original. We had seen a better version by Eddie Baddeo on these pages several months ago. Now, who's the real pirate?

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

JEFFREY Quizon calls attention to his hair.

SHARON Cuneta in a black silk chiffon

CURTAIN call for Aya Medel

ARA Mina in a feather duster of a gown

RAMONA Rivilla comes straight from a bad dream.

KLAUDIA Koronel fares no better.

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Ardent in red

Fashion photography and digital composition by Bobot Meru
PICTORIAL DIRECTION BY ANTONIO SALAC SANTOS

RED evokes power. It represents the pulse of life, elation and energy. It brings forward visually an element that makes it seem nearer to the viewer than another color.

In the East, red is the symbol of movement. It is the foil to black, the symbol of inertia. Worn alone, red is ardent and robust. When toned down by the addition of black or white, as in burgundy or fuchsia, red maintains its influence, but takes on an aura of enigma.

The Filipino Designers Group interprets red as the color of the year. The old faded photographs lend romance to these vibrant designs.

The Filipino Designers Group interprets robust red in designs that move with the times

MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE E6

CLEM Poblete wears this asymmetrical stretch tulle overlay worn over a micromini beaded strapless dress by Gregg Centeno.

EAZEL Don wears this three-button jacket with tube pants by Cesar Gaupo.

(CLOCKWISE, from top left) Lulu Tan-Gan, Rina Go, Gregg Centeno, Mike de la Rosa, Danilo Franco, Loretto and Efren Ocampo

JOAN Bitagcol wears a midriff blouse encrusted with red and turnazul beadwork and a silk gazar bouffant skirt in bold red with a crinoline black petticoat by Danilo Franco.

HAIR AND MAKEUP BY ERIC MANINGAT AND MARLON SUAREZ
MAKEUP: AVON
DIGITAL IMAGING BY STUDIO 58 LAB 10
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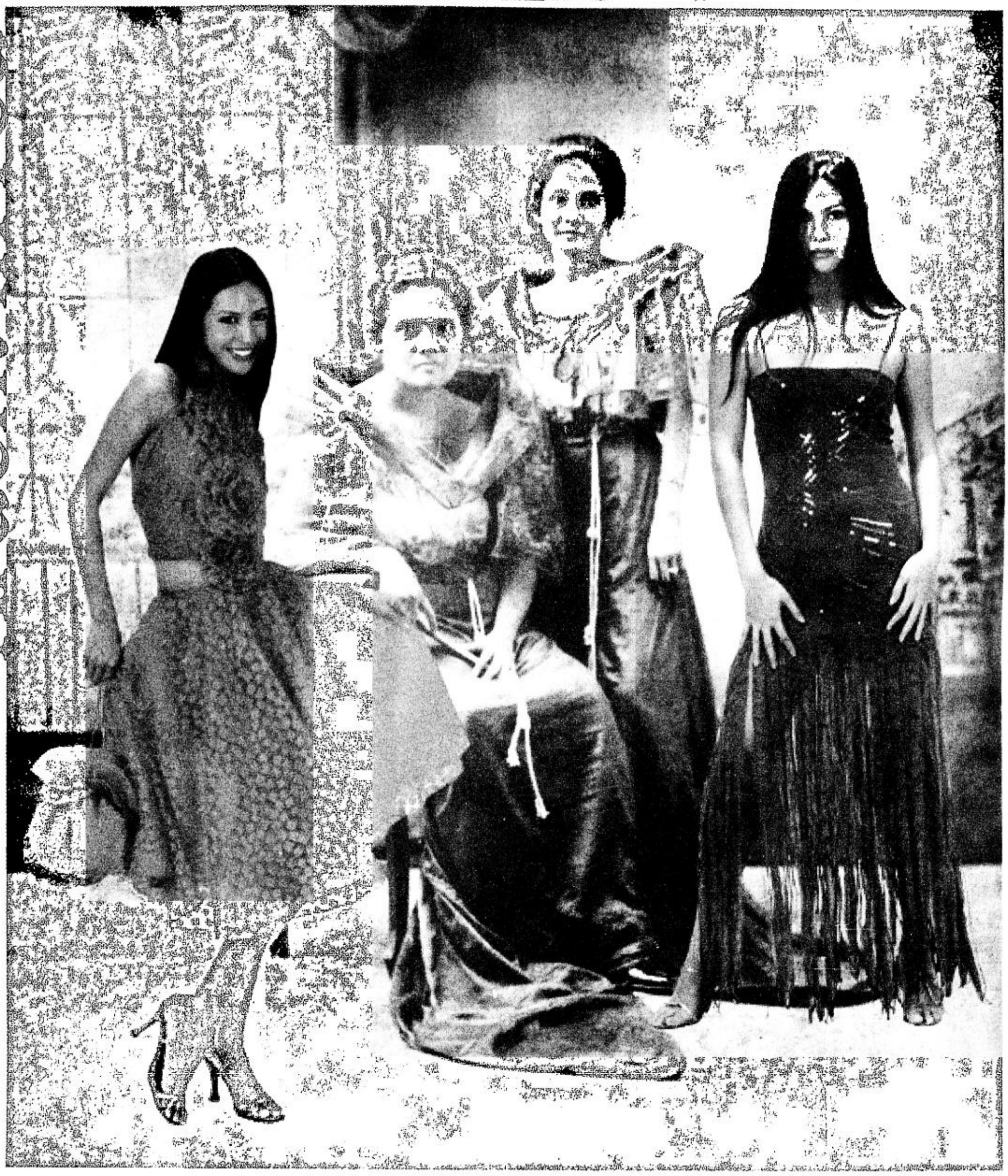
Ardent in red



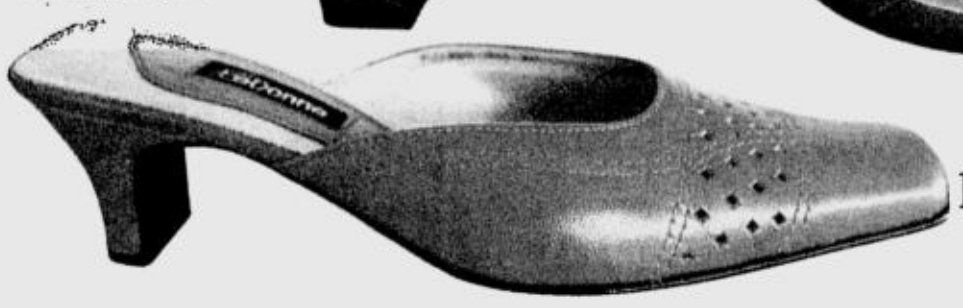
VALERIE de los Santos wears this red organdy halter top with a flirty skirt by Danilo Franco. Annette Coronel-Cruz wears this chiffon evening gown with a tendril skirt by Efren Ocampo.

MARICRIS Perez wears a hot pink chiffon T-back, bias-cut dress by Mike de la Rosa.

WESTERN look meets Oriental mysticism. Isabel Roces wears a red draped jersey top with a denim peplum skirt and hat by Rina Go of Viseversa. Gayle Ong sports this blouson tube with a striped shrug and gartered tube pants.

KHAKI and purple sandal with wooden heels, P815

RED-AND-WHITE striped mule, P895



RED mule with cut-out pattern and stitching, P1,295

Sandals and mules have become the definitive summer statement

BROWN and khaki wooden-heeled sandal with floral accents, P1,195

Sole-searching this summer

By Camille Cruz-Reyes
Contributor
Photos by Jim Guiao-Punzalan

FOR SUMMER, the casual foot's favorite is the open-toed shoe or sandal. No longer just simple and plain black or slipper-like, it is detailed and two-toned (either in contrasting colors or monochromatic hues). Sandals may be in an inch heel or slightly higher for a feminine effect.

Other women go for the slingback types of shoes that leave a little skin exposed. A mule, for example, is a good alternative to the open-toed shoe. It provides comfortable wear and is versatile. In corporate dressing, though, mule should be heeled and not flat-soled.

Mules can also be worn with jeans. A red mule with cutout detail and stitching, for example, looks chic with jeans. In the corporate environment, a solid nontextured or stitched mule is the safest choice.

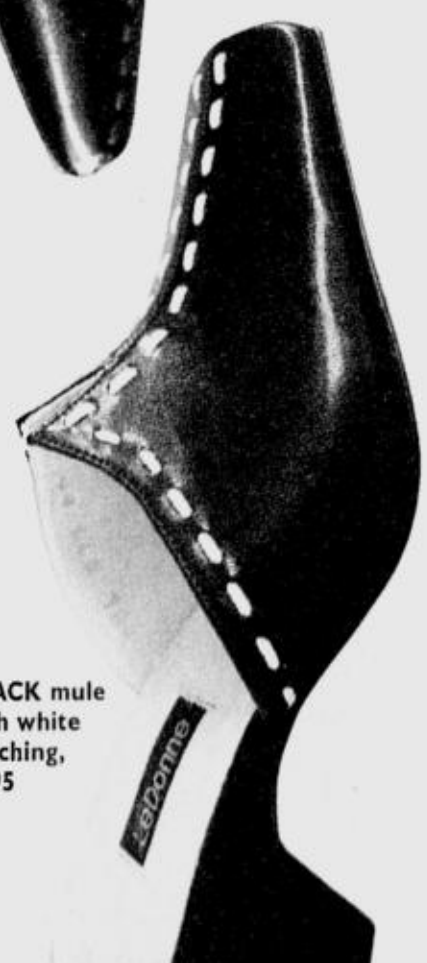
Pointed shoes are popular among women. They can be paired with skirts or slacks. Instead of an all-black, fully polished shoe, try a slingback pointed shoe with stitching.

A combination not so commonly used is brown and purple. These colors were once the monopoly of Prada. While wooden heels remain popular, sandals in lighter colors have become ubiquitous, finished off with the wooden heel. A lavender shade with a pastel brown is a good investment for summer.

E-mail the author at unit36d@vasia.com

ALL ITEMS FROM LE DONNE, G/F GLORIETTA

BLACK high-heeled slingback with gray stitching, P845



BLACK mule with white stitching, P795

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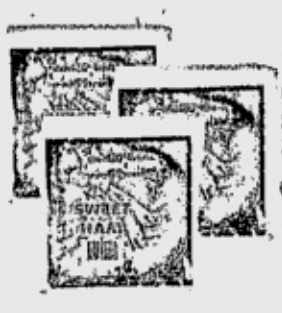

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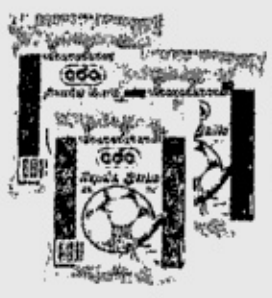

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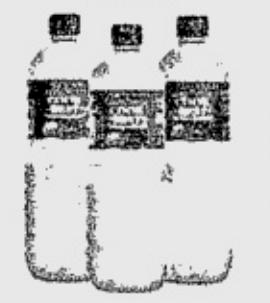

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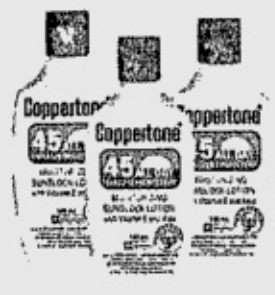

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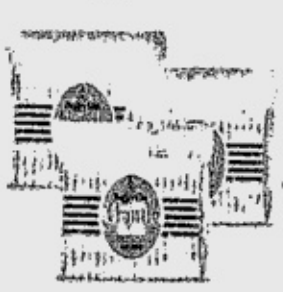

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Trend Spotting

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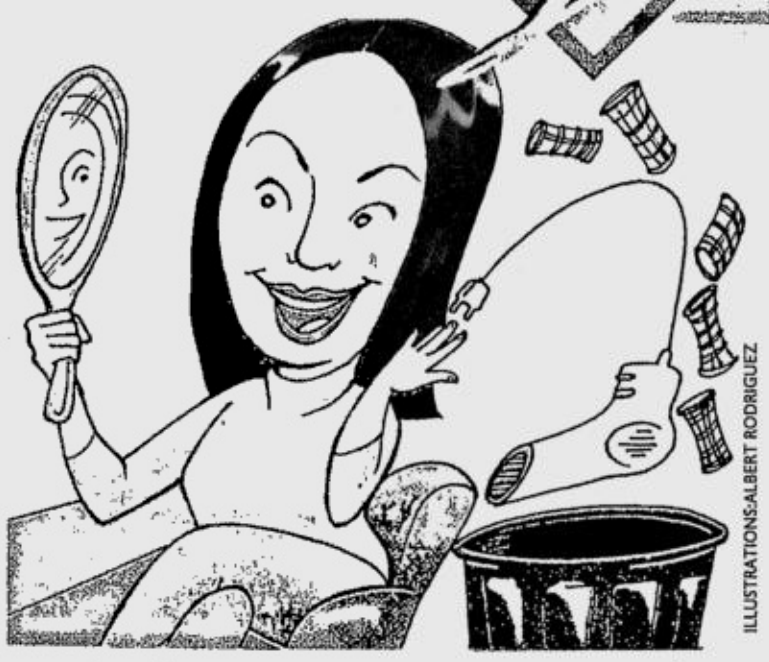

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

I have turned straight

Many women have been wondering about this style revolution. As I discovered, there is life without blow-dry

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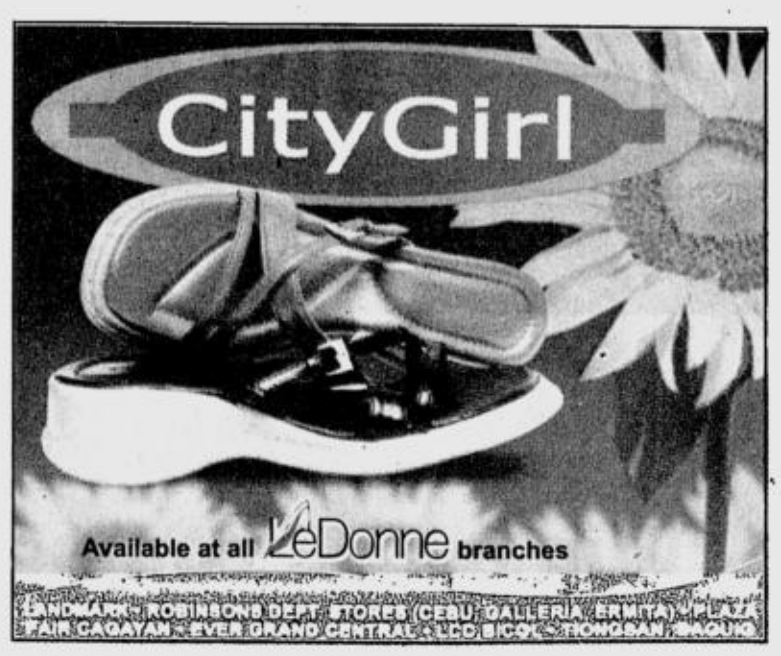

LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San

YOU don't have to be keen to notice that there's a style revolution quietly under way, for quite a while now, in fact, and I've been vain enough to get swept by it. Bluntly put, I too had my hair straight-permed. Not just "relaxed," or "pressed," or "cellophaned," but permed, which is more long-term. (Commitment there.)

Hair care/style technology has become so far advanced and fast changing that you fall behind in trying to master the jargon alone. And that's not even counting the vast variety of hair color, various degrees of hair shine, glitter and sheen now out on the market. These days, you have not only a favorite hairstylist, but also a hair colorist of choice—s/he who can whip up the right hues for you and your mood, just by adept blending. This style vanity, by the way, is not limited to us girls. Since research began tapping every imaginable kind of natural ingredients, people have gradually overcome their fear of hair substances and have become more adventurous.

I HAVE/ p.F7

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Beauty sites and cult products on the Internet

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

THE MEGA online beauty sites such as www.beauty.com and www.eve.com, disappeared as quickly as they appeared. Aside from the demise of the Internet retail industry, which forged on too fast for its own good, the presence of giants like Sephora on the Internet made competition tight and fierce. Sephora and the Estee Lauder group of companies (that now owns gloss.com) have actual bricks and mortar stores that house and move their inventory so selling online is just, as they say, icing on the cake.

Surprisingly what survived are a bevy of smaller beauty boutiques. These are small, more personalized sites that have excellent customer service and interactive message boards to promote their products. Aside from carrying smaller, hard-to-find brands and targeting a niche market, most of these sites have ventured into producing their own cosmetics. They often

give out generous samples and have very flexible return policies. Most of the time the owners are on hand to discuss your concerns with you and in some instances even custom-make some products according to your specifications. With countless webzines reviewing every beauty product out there combined with a large number of very active message boards, most of these products have reached cult-like status among Internet beauty junkies.

Here are a few sites to check out:

www.kevynaucoin.com

The name says it all. The makeup artist extraordinaire finally has his own website. For those of you who devour his monthly contribution to Allure or who religiously followed his columns on the defunct www.ibeauty.com, this is where you can get your Kevyn fix. He has fun categories like "Things I love" where he features designer friends, or the compact disc he is listening to at the moment. He has a requisite "Picture Box" with Polaroids of his and his many celebrity friends. Of course, his "insider secrets" feature his brilliant makeovers as well as step-by-step tips on makeup application. The best part of this site is that he also sells his own makeup line here. For the moment pared down to a few basics such as mascara and eyelash curler, these products are sure to grow to become must-haves for Kevyn fans.

www.whosthefairest.com

Fig Funston, a real estate agent who made being a beauty junkie a career, started this site. It has been around for a while and its customers are fiercely loyal. (You have to read the hardcore beauty boards to see what I mean.) WTF, as it is fondly called, has served as a launching pad for cult products like Pola (the best sunscreen bar none), Astara (masks like no other). It has also taken the logical step of making its own products. Its Kiss Me mascara is legendary. It is a fun site with tips and a message board. Check out the recipe for "Diane's aspirin mask," which will leave your skin baby soft.

www.fourseasonsproducts.com

Though not as cute and interactive as WTF, four seasons is another survivor of the Internet meltdown, simply because it carries a wide range of hard-to-get products. It has everything from Arcona studio to Comptoir Sud Pacifique. The fun part is, every time you order, it sends a bunch of samples for you to try out.

www.azaftigwoman.com

The site itself is not that great. In fact, it looks like one of those fly-by-night sites selling funky weight-loss junk. But if you can get over that, it has some amazing products, namely its body puddings, which have become so popular because of their delicious scents. Where else can you find scents with names like Cinnamon Buns and Nectar of the Gods? I caved in and tried the Crème Brulee and I have to say it smells amazing. Of course, if you don't want to smell like food, that's another story. But I have to add, the texture of the lotions is perfect for our weather because it is almost like water and just sinks in. But the shea butter will keep you moisturized minus the sticky factor.

Mineral

The buzzword in the makeup world recently has been mineral foundations. Originally created for women recovering from plastic surgery, minerals, as they are called, are now very popular. Even the mainstream brand Philosophy has its own version in Complete Me. Minerals are highly pigmented but in powder form so they don't create the mask-like appearance that liquid foundations tend to give. They are light and very versatile because the coverage can be adjusted. Furthermore they are usually foundation, concealer, powder and sunscreen put together. To check out four of the most sought after brands, again only available online, go to www.aucourant.com; www.bareescentuals.com; www.ybskin.com; www.janeiredale.com.

Another popular site is www.cosmeticscop.com. This is the home of Paula Begoun's newsletter and infamous cosmetic reviews. Paula's book "Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me" has been met with much criticism. For one, many companies claim that she does not actually test the products she reviews and that she bases her reviews on the ingredient lists of the products. Furthermore, she has come up with her own skincare line called Paula's Choice, which many feel, is self-serving. However, she has a loyal following and many swear by her products.

Other independent sites to check out are www.illuminairecosmetics.com, which is a fairly new site gaining popularity because of its rub-proof foundation, and www.sageskincare.com, a site that has rabidly devout customers because of the promise of flawless skin.

Bear in mind that these products don't come cheap because of our exchange rate. However, a lot of these sites have very interesting articles and tips that are worth reading. The message boards are also great for finding answers to beauty dilemmas and to catch up on the latest buzz in beauty.

E-mail the author at cherishgh@yahoo.com

Win a VCD component or a karaoke in . . .

Sa Mercury Drug at Strepsils, kahit ilang round ang sing-along!

Lalo na kapag may sarili kang Sony VCD Component o Sharp Karaoke mula sa Sing na Sing Raffle. Kaya bili na ng Strepsils sa alinmang branch ng Mercury Drug sa Greater Manila Area. Ihulog ang wrapper sa dropbox kasama ng resibo na may pangalan, tirahan, telephone number at signature. Kapag may Strepsils, siguradong may 'sing-alooooong'!

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0182, Series of 2002.

Dichlorobenzyl Alcohol
Amylmetacresol

Strepsils
First Aid For Sore Throats

Summer collection features old and new

PINK and Blue Soda has launched its Summer Collection 2002.

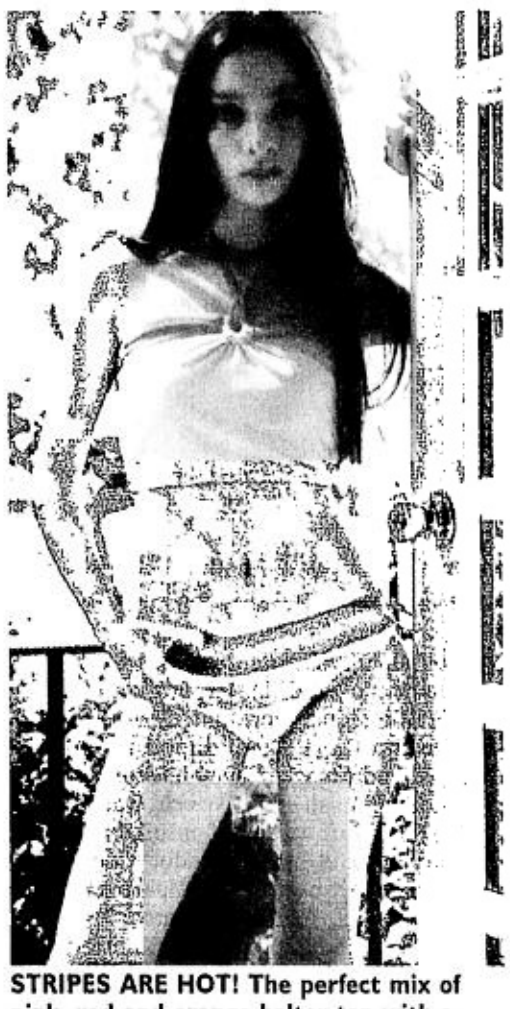
The Pink Soda collection from the designing team led by Candice Bona and Jun Trinidad, features lots of floral prints, plains and plaids in very practical colors like sand, beige, blacks and whites.

Blue Soda's crossover collection, designed by Jonathan Alegre, features bright red in most of the shirts. There is also a revival of super darks with black and navy blue in jerseys and nylons. Other items are in a variety of denims, khaki and sand in fabrics like chintz and canvas.

The new look of Pink and Blue Soda is carried by image models Rafael Rosell IV and Audrey Tan, who will go on a series of mall tours in April. Photography is by Jun de Leon.

Rosell, 19, was born and raised in Norway. He is seen regularly on Channel 2's "Tabing Ilog." Tan is a VJ for Studio 23 and has appeared in TV commercials. Tan is also19 years old.

Hit the beach with the right swimwear



STRIPES ARE HOT! The perfect mix of pink, red and orange halter top with a bikini from Naf Naf Paris

THIS is the perfect time to shop for that perfect bathing suit. Cinderella will help you choose the swimwear which is comfy and right for you.

• Style is the most important factor. You have to know your body structure to get the style that will help you look your best. Know which part of your body needs a little hiding then highlight your assets. Nowadays, it doesn't matter if it is a 2-piece set or a 1-piece swimwear. Just choose the one perfect for your body.

• Color is a matter of preference. One's skin tone is the perfect gauge in choosing the right color. Bright hues are in for summer. So are black and white.

• Florals, checks and stripes are also hot during summer. If you are on the heavy side, stay away from large prints which will make you look heavier. Vertical stripes, on the other hand, can help you look taller and slimmer.

• Accessories add life to your get-up. A printed sarong is perfect for a walk on the beach. Protect your eyes with a pair of trendy shades.

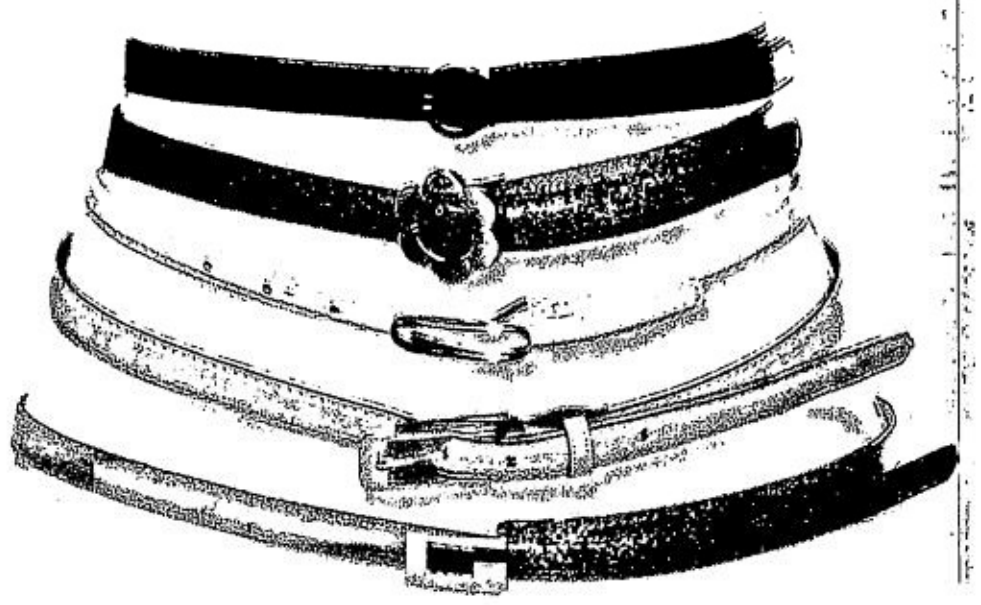
Check out Naf Naf Paris, Seventeen Young Co. and Resort Shop for the best bathing suits this summer. Available at all Cinderella outlets.

VENUE: CAYLABNE BAY RESORT AT TERNATE, CAVITE.

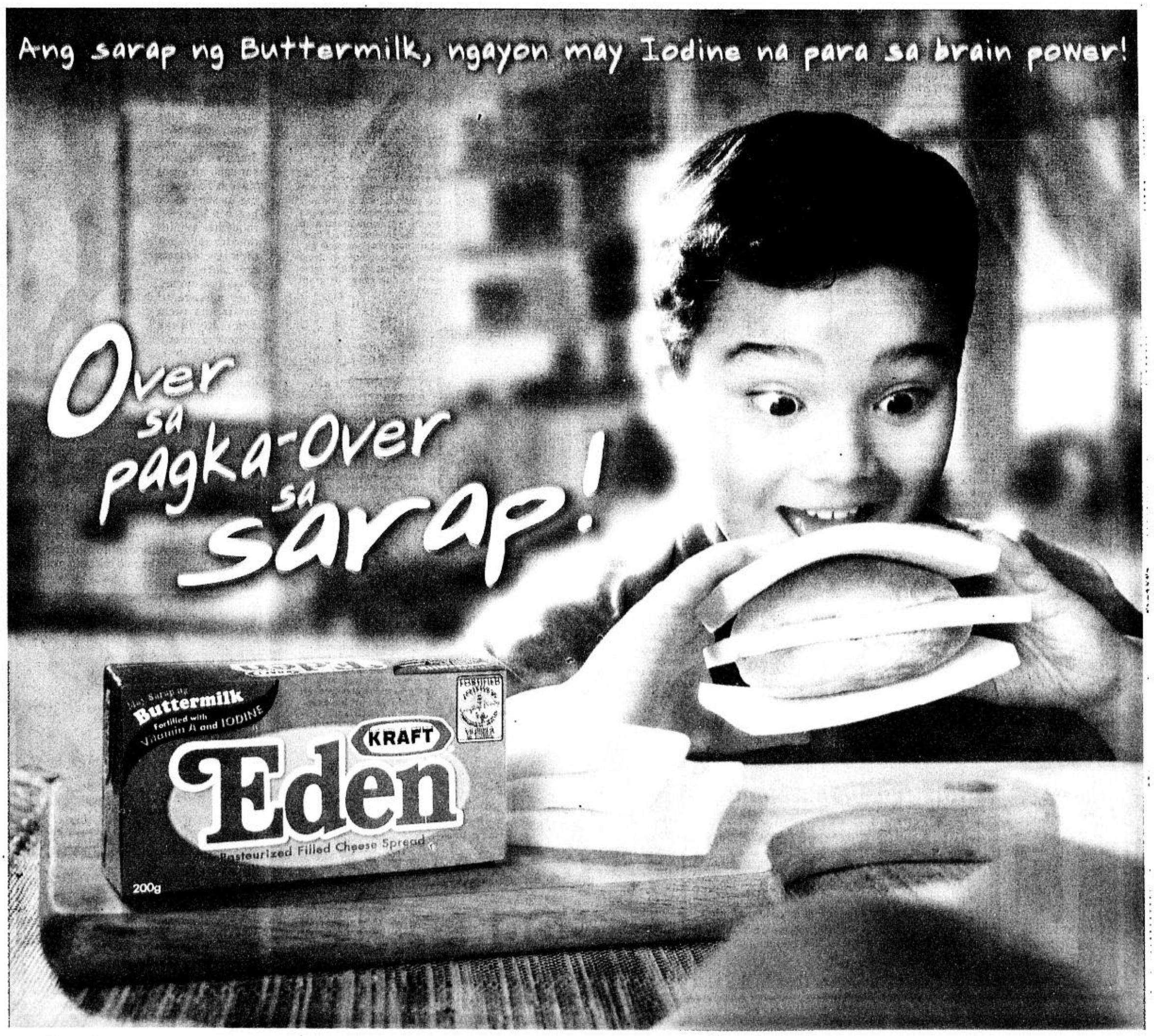
At the Ladies' Accessories Department

Alexandria
BY: ALBETTIE

Faux leather belts with your choice of metal-finish buckles



We've got it all for you!
SM DEPARTMENT STORE
MAHATI • CUBAO • HARRISON • NORTH EDSA • STA. MESA • ORTIGAS • LAS PINAS • BACOOR • FAIRVIEW • ILOILO



Specializing in special events

By Marge C. Enriquez
Photos by Patrick Uy

TO REACH out to consumers, big companies are investing on special events aside from advertising. An event hits two birds with one stone: Not only does it create an interaction between the brand managers and the target market, it also generates publicity that appeals to readers differently from the audience captured by advertising.

Last weekend, publicist and special events specialist Keren Pascual took the party scene over the edge by bringing the social scene to Boracay. Touted "The Voyage Party: Famous," the three-day event got young Manila's social set (including the boyish Louie Ysmael) to get acquainted with the major sponsors through sports and fashion shows.

A Boracay powwow shows marketing is not confined alone to advertising and a specific brand

More than 250 souls, mostly good-looking hunks and babes from fashion and show biz were flown in by Asian Spirit and were billeted at the Boracay Terraces Resort where the happenings were held. On Saturday night, D'Mall D' Boracay was quiet as the events on the island were divided into Edd Fuentes' fashion show and body contest at his resort and "The Voyage Party."

Summer welcome

Before that, Pascual and business partner Joji Dingcong had presented a proposal to big sponsors such as Smart and Zed. The tack was that "The Voyage Party" would be the first among a series of events lined up in Boracay. According to Milagros "Miles" Inocentes, Smart's marketing events manager, "The Voyage Party" would be the first in a series of Smart's tours to welcome the vacation season. It was a strategy for consumers to associate this telecommunications firm with summer.

Like most companies, Smart evaluates media mileage, sales potentials, merchandising and sales commitment before it sponsors an event.

For "The Voyage Party," it was more of a "tactical approach," says Inocentes. "We wanted to open summer officially with an activity."

(Read: To Smart, it was a nifty way to beat competition since another telecommunications company was scheduled to hold an event during Holy Week.)

"The Voyage Party" would certainly generate publicity since it invited celebrities such as Mylene Dizon, Sunshine Dizon, Diether Ocampo, Marvin Agustin, Bing Loyzaga, Albert and Liezl Martinez, Vina Morales, Kenji Marquez, Rica Peralejo, Bernard Palanca and Jaya. Cogie Domingo was there and when you see Cogie, can Penshoppe be far behind? Photographers such as Patrick Uy, Raymund Isaac and Raul Teehankee were present. Society columnists such as Johnny Litton and Pepper Teehankee represented the print media. Earlier, Isaac did pictorials on the beach for Golden ABC's Penshoppe and Oxygen labels.

It was easy for the organizer to sell this party because of its media values. The event garnered coverage from the "F" team consisting of Daphne Oseña, Angel Aquino and Cher Calvin; "Sports Unlimited" with Dyan Castillejo, MTV with KC Montero, and Channel 7 with Rico Gutierrez, director of "Extra, Extra." Also there was Zed, a content provider that hooks up information such as logos, ringing tones and even Chinese horoscope. Earlier, 105.1 Crossover represented radio. Since Ricco Ocampo was a childhood friend of Pascual, support was given by i2i stores.

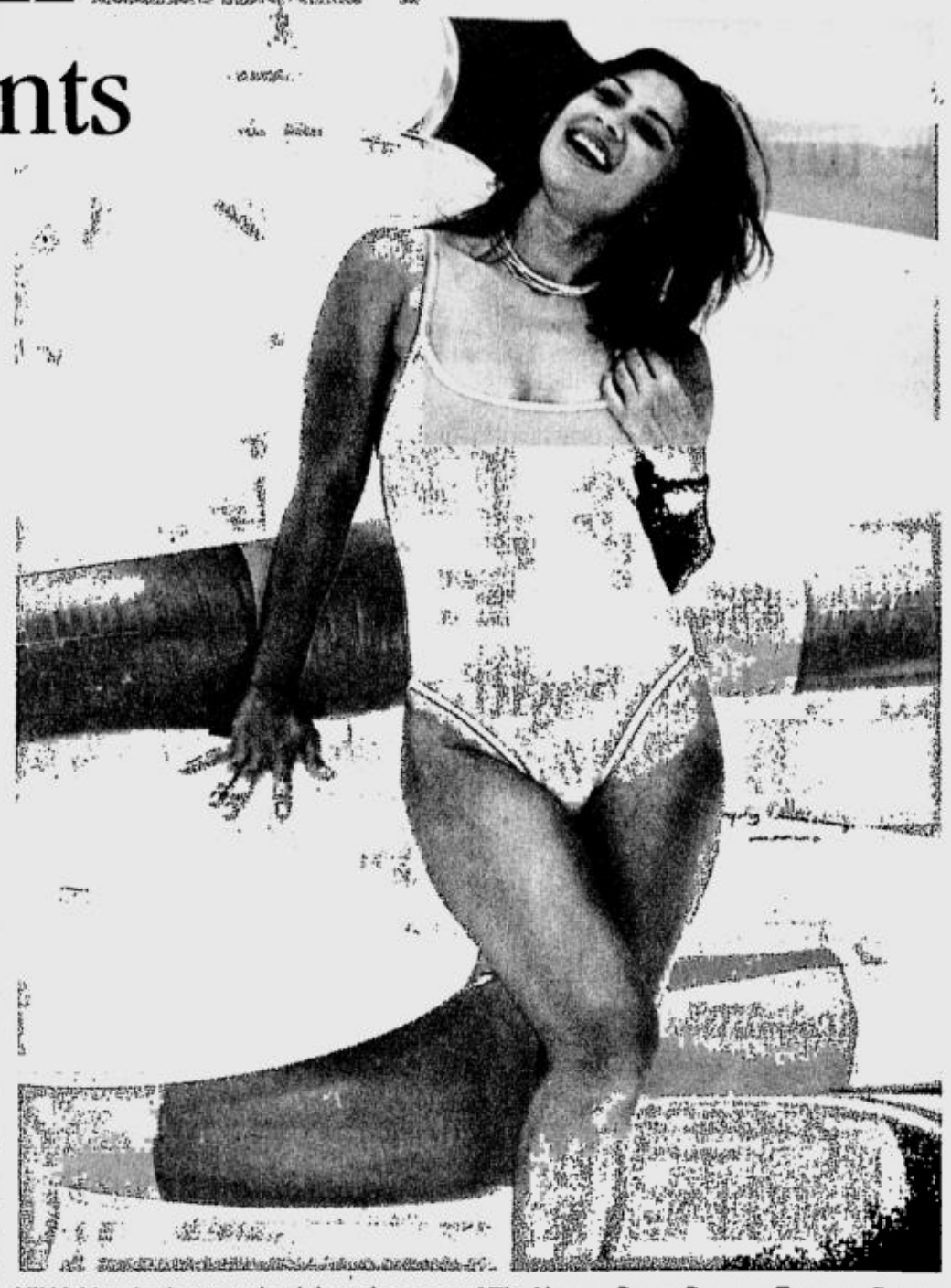
Suunto, a Finnish sports watch, was introduced to the public when it sponsored a hobie race. During the evening, Davidoff Cool Water, which is part perfume and part toiletry brand, marketed itself by sponsoring the Boracay's Best Body 2002 contest, hosted by Jackie Castillejo. Actually, it was more a contest of charm and wit rather than brawn and boobs.

Indeed, a major sponsor like Smart has gotten coverage, even if only the streamers on the background which are caught on the video footage or the name is mentioned in the society columns.

Asked why Smart would sponsor such an event since it's not selling its services or handsets, Inocentes replies that it's more for the image. Readers are more interested than stories. The message of Smart hits them differently in the context of an editorial (which is written independent of any influence) as opposed to an advertisement. The event is one of those few occasions when companies are seen in the lifestyle section in a more appealing way compared with the straight news in the business pages.

By Tuesday, lifestyle editors received a press kit of "The Voyage." Last Wednesday, a follow-up of "The Voyage" was held at Che at Power Plant. Although it coincided with Pascual's birthday, he said the party was part of his work.

VINA Morales with her prize catches Kenji Marquez, Chunchi Soler and John Urutia. VINA'S CLOTHES: PAUL SMITH AT GLORIETTA AND SHANGRI-LA PLAZA

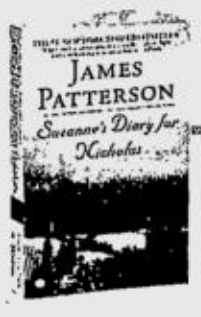


VINA Morales is pretty in pink at the scene of The Voyage Party, Boracay Terraces Resort

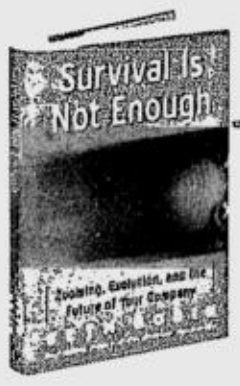
SHOWING off her famous abs

HOT PICKS! MARCH

PRAYERS: A Communion with our Creator
Don Miguel Ruiz
P 595.00
Live in love and happiness as you discover the peace, the rest, and the grace that prayer unleashes. Written to inspire and challenge, this book will open your eyes!



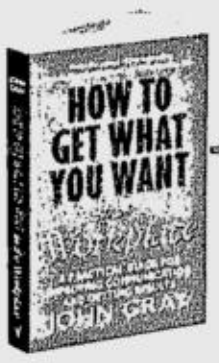
SUZANNE'S DIARY FOR NICHOLAS
James Patterson
P 319.00
When Katie's new love mysteriously disappears, she is left only with a diary. As she reads it, she unearths secrets that reveal her lover's past and possibly even her future.



SURVIVAL IS NOT ENOUGH
Seth Godin
P 929.00
Do you "zoom"? The newest catch-phrase in today's business arena, to zoom means to embrace change without pain. Learn how your company can zoom to become an evolving business that stays profitable even during times of great change.

THE SAINTS' GUIDE TO HELP WHEN LIFE HURTS
Cynthia Cavnar
P 375.00
Let the wisdom of the saints encourage you as you walk the valleys of life and discover how suffering allows you to become more like Christ.

LONE EAGLE
Danielle Steel
P 319.00
As WWII rages, dashing aviator Joe Allbright falls madly in love with Kate Jamison. Now, Joe must choose between his dreams of flying and a love that will come once in a lifetime.

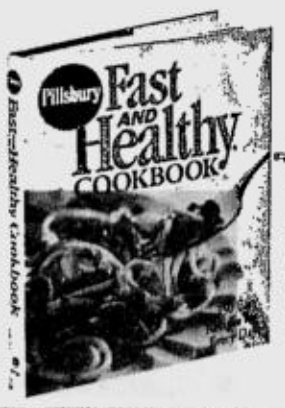


HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT IN THE WORKPLACE
John Gray
P 515.00
Bestselling author and speaker John Gray gives you advice on how to harness your creativity and potential for lasting success, fulfillment, and happiness at work.

SLEEPYTIME STORIES AND RHYMES
Brown Watson
P 249.00
A delightful collection of fairy tales and nursery rhymes your children will ask you to read over and over again!

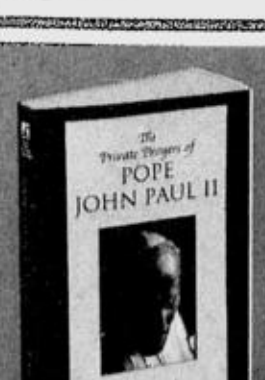
ONE HUNDRED AND ONE READ-ALOUD-CLASSICS
Pamela Horn, ed.
P 535.00
Introduce your children to magical classics with ten-minute readings from favorites tales like *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Secret Garden, Peter Pan* and much more!

PEACEFUL SPACES
Alice Whately
P1,019.00
Turn your home into an oasis of calm through the use of soft colors and natural materials. Your body and soul will surely benefit from the creation of your own tranquil escape.



FAST AND HEALTHY COOKBOOK
The Pillsbury Company
P 899.00
350 low-fat yet delicious recipes, each with nutrition information. Plus, page after page of helpful info and fun facts on how to eat right. A must for all health buffs!

TROPICAL ASIAN COOKING:
Exotic Flavors from Equatorial Asia
P 1,839.00
Experience Asia through your taste buds! Modern interpretations of traditional recipes from India to the Maldives will bring you on an exotic journey of flavors!



Hot Book of the Month!
THE PRIVATE PRAYERS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II: Words of Inspiration
P 279.00
Take a peek into the tireless heart and the enduring thoughts of the Pope. This collection of inspiring reflections and illuminating words of hope, peace, love, compassion, and spirituality is now available in a beautiful edition to treasure.

National Book Store
www.nationalbookstore.com

AT LOUIE Y's boat-bar

Call for help

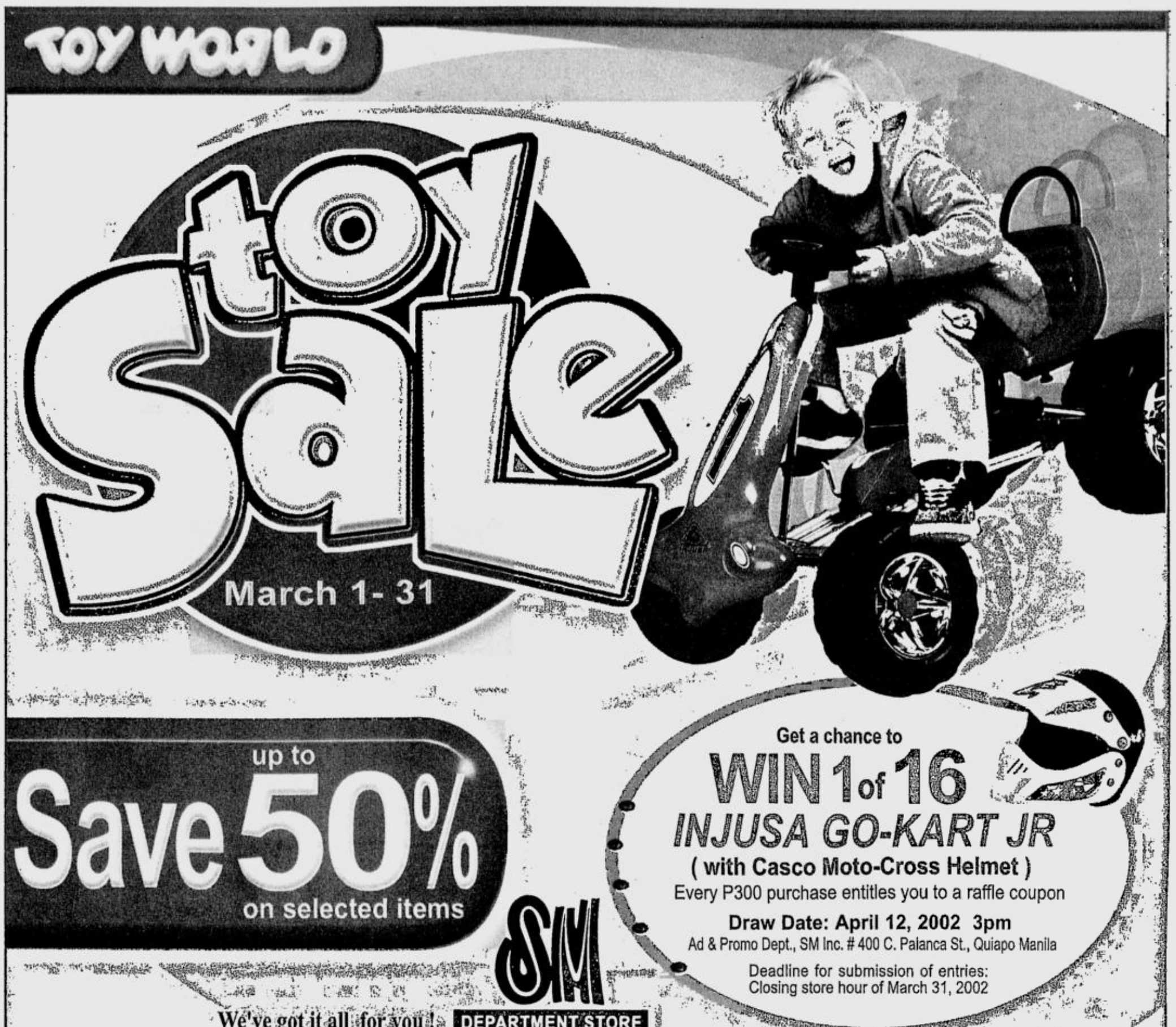
IF you've reached at least college level, have time on your hands as well as a sense of commitment to humanity, maybe you would like to counsel and give information to callers of Helpline 525-5845.

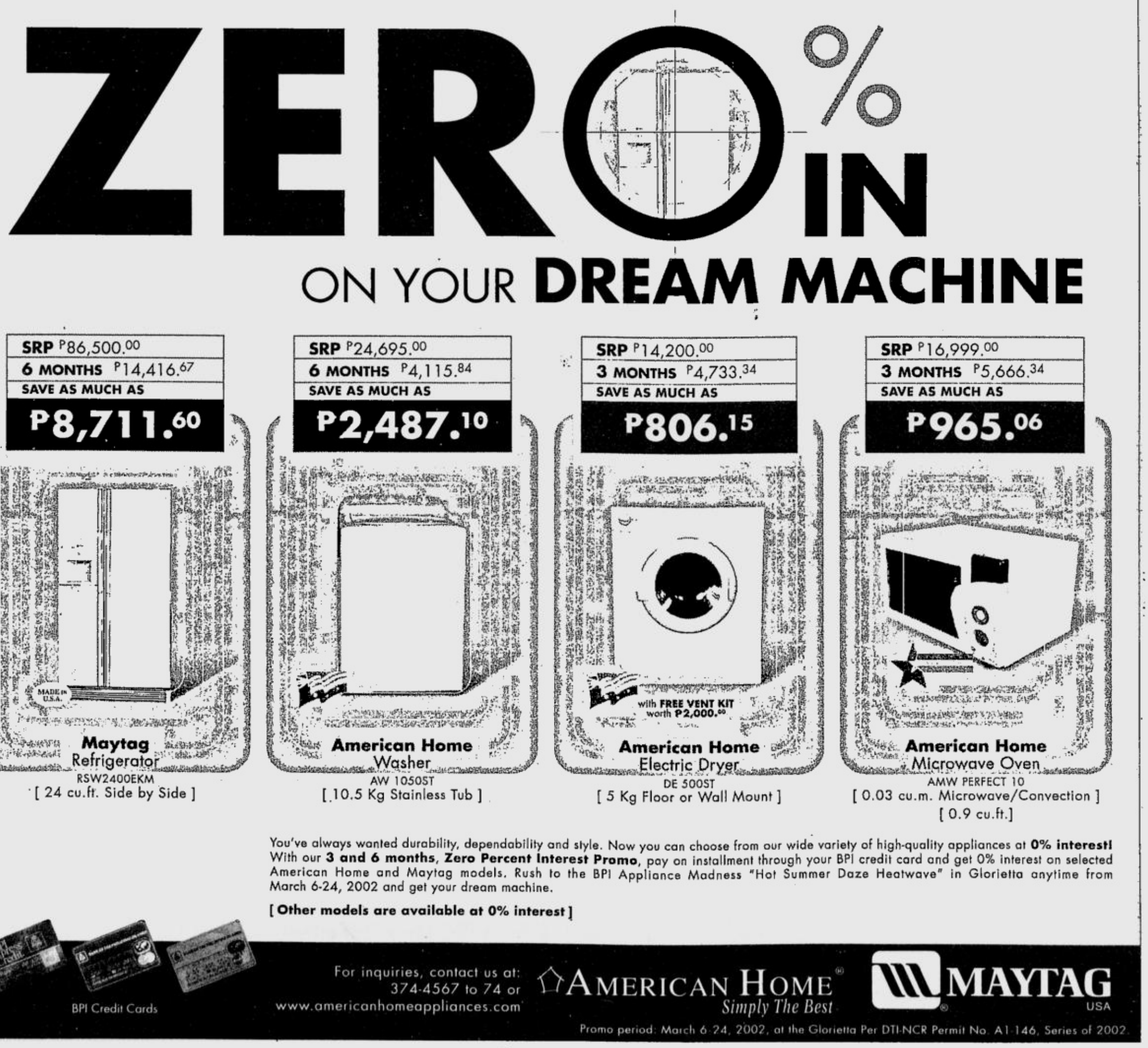
Helpline was set up in 1993 as a reference number and support for outreach-based and media activities of the ReachOut Foundation International.

"The program fits into the package of services offered by the foundation by giving correct and nonjudgmental information, which is very essential on, initially, the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS and, since 1997, on sexuality, family planning, prevention of violence against women and children, and other reproductive health concerns," explains Jomar Fleras, ReachOut Foundation International president and chief executive officer.

ReachOut ensures comprehensive and intensive training on counseling on all aspects of STDs and reproductive health, as a response to the recommendations of the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development.

Call 526-6887, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Those accepted will undergo intensive training on reproductive health and counseling all weekends of April.





MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Fabio, Phil Lesh, Sly Stone

Happy Birthday: You'll be ingenious when it comes to making your money grow this year. You'll have an eye for good investments, and the ability to make your move at precisely the right moment. Peculiar circumstances will arise concerning legal or financial matters. Steer clear of joint ventures. Your numbers are 3, 8, 12, 22, 35, 41

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will be raring to go today. Don't leave room to twiddle your thumbs or you may find yourself getting into mischief. You must fill your day with plenty of activity.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Keep your thoughts to yourself and avoid any altercations with officials or authority figures. This is not the day to take care of personal papers or to deal with government agencies.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You will want to help others or save the environment or lobby against something you believe in. You can make a difference but you can't do it all by yourself.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Don't let anyone get the better of you today. If someone is trying to get a rise out of you ignore him or her and go about your own business.Changes at home will make a difference.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your desire to learn about different countries and their cultures will lead to travel arrangements. Be positive and engage in physical activities that will help you develop your competitive nature.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You may want to help others but you must remember that charity begins at home. You will have a tendency to donate too much or you'll be conned out of your cash by a fast-talking salesperson.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Problems with partners will arise. Don't confront situations that have been festering. Changes will be disruptive but must be accepted.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Work in conjunction with others and you will accomplish the most. Do as much as you can behind the scenes and be sure to praise those around you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): It's time to work on yourself. Lose weight, get fit, and make positive changes. However, don't go spending too much in the process. The best investment you could make today is in yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You may not get the kind of understanding you are looking for from friends and relatives. Keep your opinions to yourself and focus on your career objectives or your position in a group that you belong to.

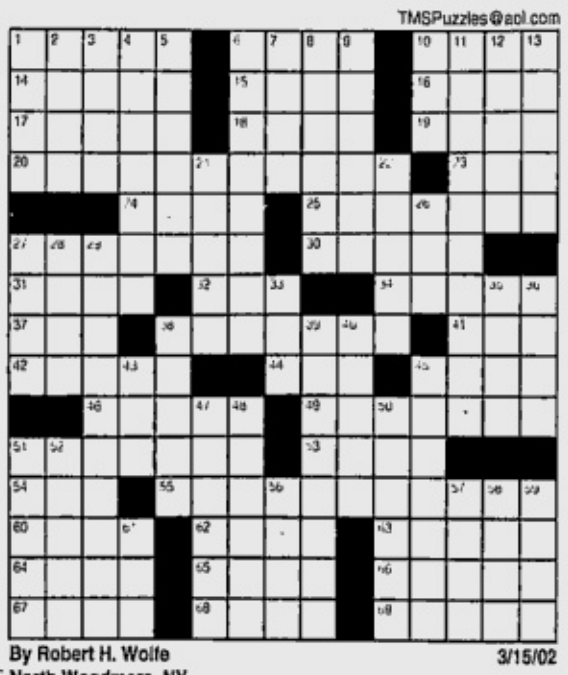
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll be in a wandering mood today. Take a short trip or just go sightseeing in your own neighborhood. Opportunities to be on the road are likely.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get your financial act together. It's time to make changes that will lead to greater financial independence. Stop spending and start to invest.

Birthday Baby: You have the ability to visualize and create all sorts of things at a very early age. You are levelheaded, loyal and responsible. You will always try your best because you want to please everyone you love.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

3/15/02

ACROSS
1 Port of Iraq
6 Burden
10 Healing sign
14 Was sore
15 Johnnycake
16 Top-rated
17 Vacuous
18 Perry's penner
19 Piece for two
20 Legitimate underwear?
23 Backstabber
24 French mother
25 Old Blue Eyes
27 Prepare for printing
30 Off. skill
31 Highway or byway
32 Farm enclosure
34 Terra firma
37 __ longa, vita brevis
38 More sedate
41 Vegas cube
42 Passover, to many who celebrate it
44 Female swan
45 Congeal
46 "To hold as __ the mirror up to nature"
49 Guided
51 Troop formation
53 British composer
54 That girl
55 Brother's keeper?
60 Soho subway
62 Civil disorder
63 Actress Taylor
64 Etc.'s cousin
65 Diminutive ending
66 Worker nest-egg legis.
67 Villein
68 Pair
69 Aromatic compound

DOWN
1 Security cash
2 Complexion problem
3 Uneven cut
4 Titled anew
5 Simpson and Astaire
6 Light musical production
7 Japanese purple seaweed
8 Except if
9 Think best
10 Low
11 Fast food for the bench?
12 Close, to Blake
13 Siamese fighting fish
21 Brittany seaport
22 Contemptuous expression
26 Last of a collection?
27 Snare
28 Olden times
29 Stay on the wagon?
33 Little yelp
35 Roof piece
36 Maintained
38 Outcropping
39 Processed seawater
40 Door
43 Amazement
45 Ones who mock
47 Bellowed
48 Deep-seated mutual hatred
50 TV dinner element
51 Photorealist painter
52 Inclined trough
56 Bit
57 BTU part
58 Mobutu __ Seko
59 Glum drop?
61 Santa's helper

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

O	Y	E	Z		C	A	M	P		S	L	O	P	E
W	O	V	E		A	B	E	L		T	O	T	A	L
E	Y	E	S		V	O	T	E		R	O	I	L	S
D	O	N	T	M	O	V	E	A	M	U	S	C	L	E
				O	R	E			I	C	E			
P	R	O	M	P	T		W	O	N	K		S	P	Y
E	E	R	I	E		S	O	N	S		S	H	O	E
S	T	A	N	D	S	T	O	C	K	S	T	I	L	L
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G	I	S	T	S		S	E	W	N		A	Y	E	S

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3/15/02

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

I have turned straight

From apge F1

But that is digressing from my own adventure. As I wrote months ago, I first got the idea in Hong Kong where I saw girls with pin-straight hair, and it looked good on them. That was all it took for **Ricky Reyes** to convince me to try the straight-perming technology he has adopted from Korea.

Ricky researched on the technology, the substances and most important, the application, for which he trained his staff for a month.

Not life threatening

And since many readers have asked me about it, I might as well share the experience. It wasn't life-threatening at all. Of course, it helped that I had faith in Ricky. To begin with, to see how I'd look with a straight hair, he let me have my hair pressed, instead of the usual blow-dry—good until my next shampoo. Convinced that I didn't look like Morticia Adams, I decided to go ahead with the long-term style change—straight perm, not just press.

First, the catch—you can't shampoo your hair for four days. What?! Gulp—that meant no tennis, no workout, no excessive sweating for what would seem like eternity. Assured that I wouldn't be made an outcast in the office (and that there wouldn't be a board meeting with the gods), I finally mustered the guts to show up at Ricky's One on One salon one Saturday. I was told you had to sit through six hours of it. (Style is time investment.)

So with my lap top, I was deadset on using the time to write my column as they did my hair. First, they apply the hair straightening chemical, then they wash it off. Next, they apply the neutralizer, wash it off again. Then using the ionic plate, they press your hair, thin clump by clump. This process is what takes time, especially if your hair is long (mine is just shoulder-length) and thick (mine is thin and fine). In three hours, mine was done, and so was my column, so no time wasted and everybody happy, including my sons who waited it out. I was actually surprised it didn't take so long.

Now, about the no-shampooing part. Sunday was no problem. Monday was manageable. Tuesday, well, I broke the commandment—I shampooed at the end of the day. Got away with it. The perm stayed. That was January. My hair's still straight.

Nondrying

Contrary to what I feared, it didn't dry up, but even became finer and smoother. No misplaced waves. My hair wasn't curly to begin with, but still a needle-straight hair looks casually stylish. It made a difference that Ricky, just using the scissors, gave it a pointy edge—that wispy effect. (The term he uses is "whisper," as soft and fluid as a whisper.)

The biggest plus, however, is you don't have to blow-dry. This is the honest-to-goodness wash-and-wear style, but without losing the illusion of volume. No wonder they consider the straight perm as nothing short of revolutionary because for the first time in decades, we are freed from having to blow-dry, or worse, use rollers on our hair. After shampooing I just let it dry, or with my hands, press my hair before the electric fan, and I'm ready to go. In a big hurry, you can just towel-dry.

However, consumers must choose the hair salon wisely. Our editorial assistant had his straight-perm, and in three days his curls were back and his hair visibly damaged. Obviously, not every hair salon that proclaims this kind of service knows the right—and safe—way to straight perm.

There are steps the hair salon must follow. First, they should analyze your hair—is it damaged, treated often? Or is it a virgin—meaning has it never known color, perm or any kind of treatment at all? Obviously, in hair or other respects, there aren't many virgins left. If by chance, your hair is still a virgin, it's bound to end up hard and unruly, so Ricky colors it first, to soften it.

Know your type

Hair analysis is important because it will determine the amount of straight-perming substances to be used, and the time limit of application.

Pressing with the use of ionic plates is also an important process for which the staff must be well trained. In many cases, it's nothing short of counting your strands, Ricky said.

You must also know that in the past, using outdated technology, they used lye acid to straighten hair. This is what you must watch against, Ricky said, for lye is the chemical used in bathroom cleansers. So nothing's more alarming than that. If the staff applying the substance wears gloves, you can panic, for that means the chemicals are really strong. (Ricky's staff uses their bare hands.)

In today's straight-perm process, amino acid is used to hold the perm, and it is applied way below the scalp, so nothing touches the scalp.

Straight-perm is different from hair-relaxing. The latter doesn't take out the curls or waves, it merely relaxes your hair.

I've been wearing my straight-perm for three months now, and I can't complain. It's good to the touch—and not only of your bitchy gay friends.

Now all I need is a good head on my shoulder.

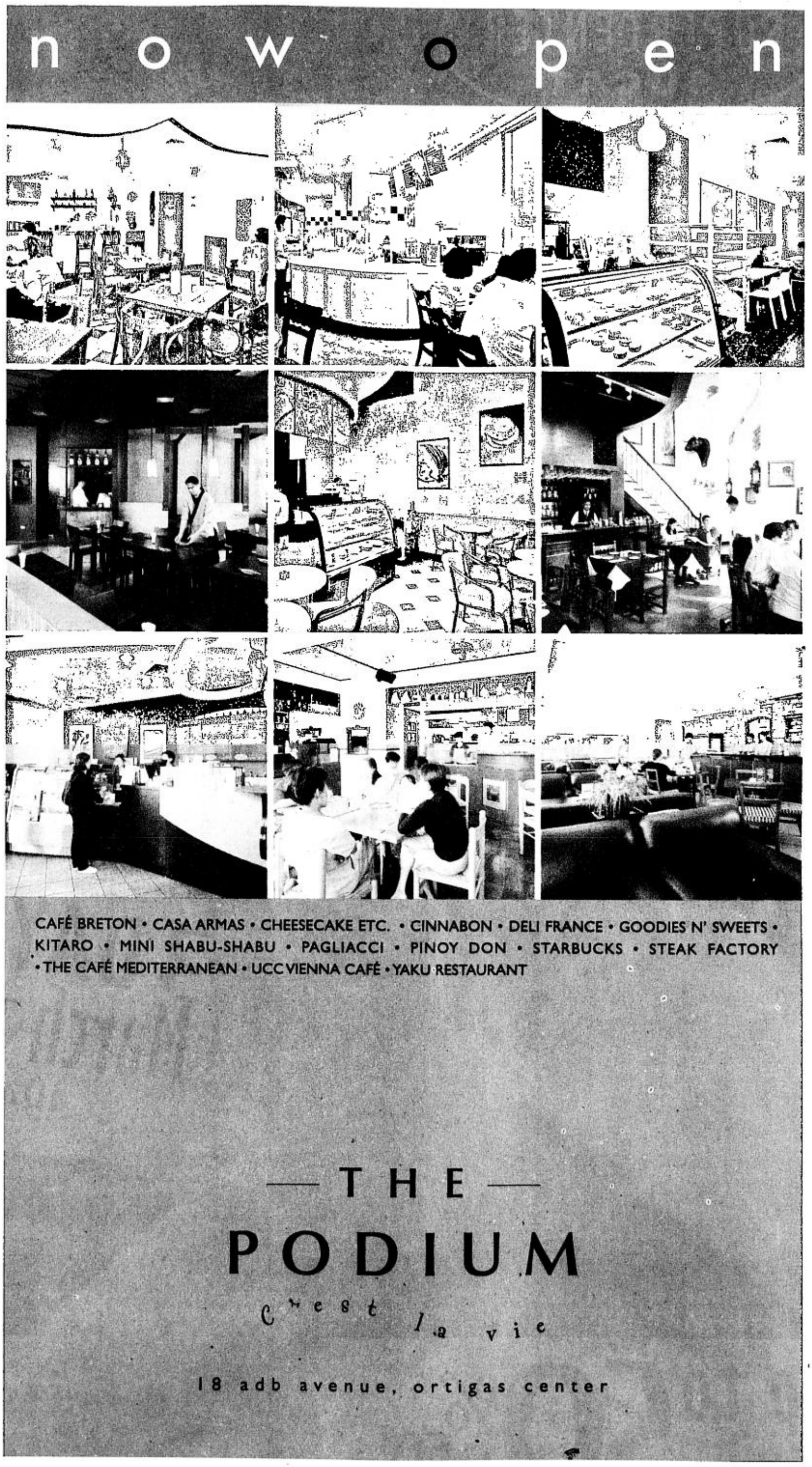
Post-hunk show

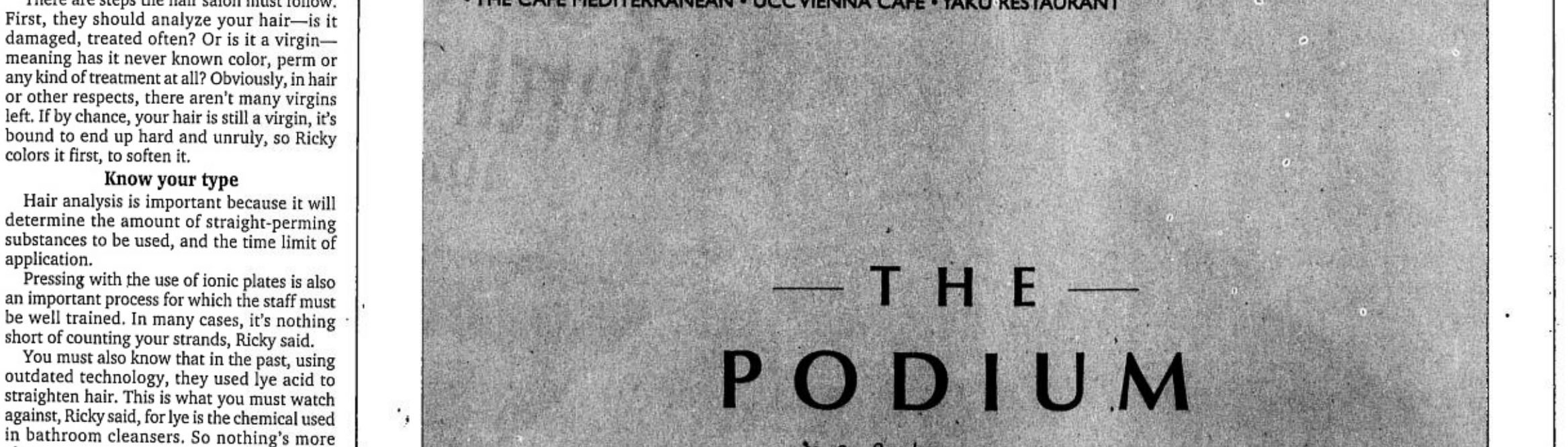
I GOT this hilarious bitchy feedback from a friend on my "hunks" column: "My guess is that your friends at the Hunk show were—a) *matronas* deciding between playing Mother of the Year or Mrs. Robinson; b) gays plotting how best to transform desire to red-hot reality; c) lesbians wondering what the excitement is all about; d) aging machos who, after visually measuring onstage hair, pecs, biceps, abs, butts and, above all, *bukols*, and mentally comparing these with theirs, reluctantly conclude that only their bellies and butts are larger than the hunks'. Naturally all were silent at the end of the show."

Peep show at 'men's room'

IF you're not plunging right into Midnight Madness tonight, you can check out Venezia and Buddha's Bar at Ayala Center. **Edge Pumante** and the other guys of Studio 23 have really prepared a to-talk-about happening to launch "Temptation Island." They're turning Venezia into a "men's room" where you can have a peep show, and Buddha's Bar into a "ladies room." As far as I know this hasn't been done in Manila. It's interesting to see how the two "rooms" will play out. All that peeping starts at 10 p.m.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph





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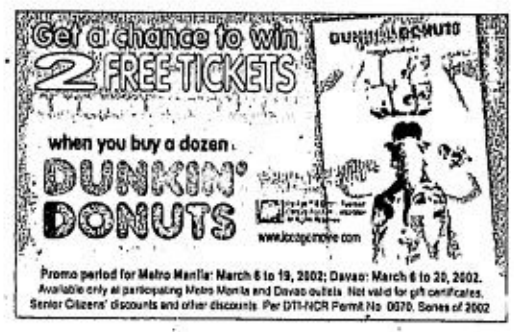
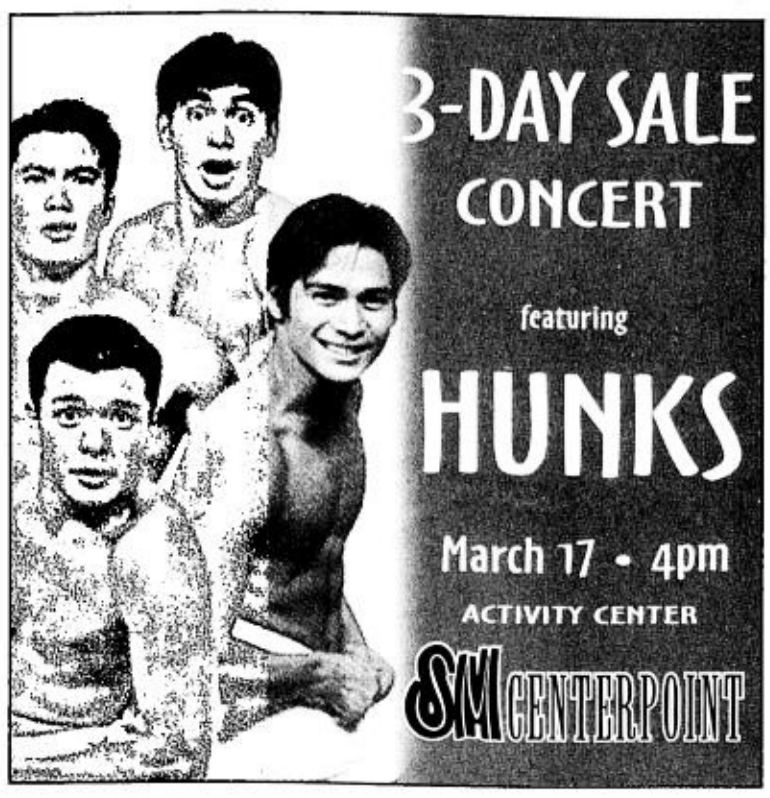
Trend Notes



The hunt for home style

MODERN version of the classic *ikat*. The weave structure contrasts the smooth and textured, slender and broad with the solid and the multicolored, resulting in a lovely orchestrated arrangement.



By Avie Gochoco-Perez
Contributor

BACK to basics. Contemporary. Lots of nature, as in lots of wood, as in sanded and further sanded *molave* and *kamagong*. Wood with character, and we don't mean the *palo china* used for knocked-down furniture, but black pinewood the Ifugaos are so adept at carving.

It's back to nature, it's people going on spiritual journeys to de-clutter their lives. So with their homes. They want to "take flight, not get pulled down" by excess baggage, says Baby Girl Baluyut Fricke, merchandising manager and director of home interiors shop Artemis, which carries stuff and more stuff to dress up a home calmly, timelessly, sophisticatedly with touches of color here and there to perk up the senses.

The showroom of Artemis, one place to go for decorative fabrics, wallpaper, trimmings, furniture, objects, hardware and bath fittings, has just undergone a change under the baton of Baby Girl.

Standouts

Standouts are "cigarette tables" in solid old *molave*, sanded down to the smoothest of finishes so that each is good enough to hold a much bigger kind of butt. The cigarette tables, after all, are as tall as standard chairs, are rounded on top and slightly, seamlessly tapered to the bottom.

The "mentos" chairs are solid, squat ottomans in dark wood. Given the name because of their shape, which takes after the well-known white mint candy, Baby Girl points to one and invites her visitor to "sit, and see how comfortable it is." She was not wrong.

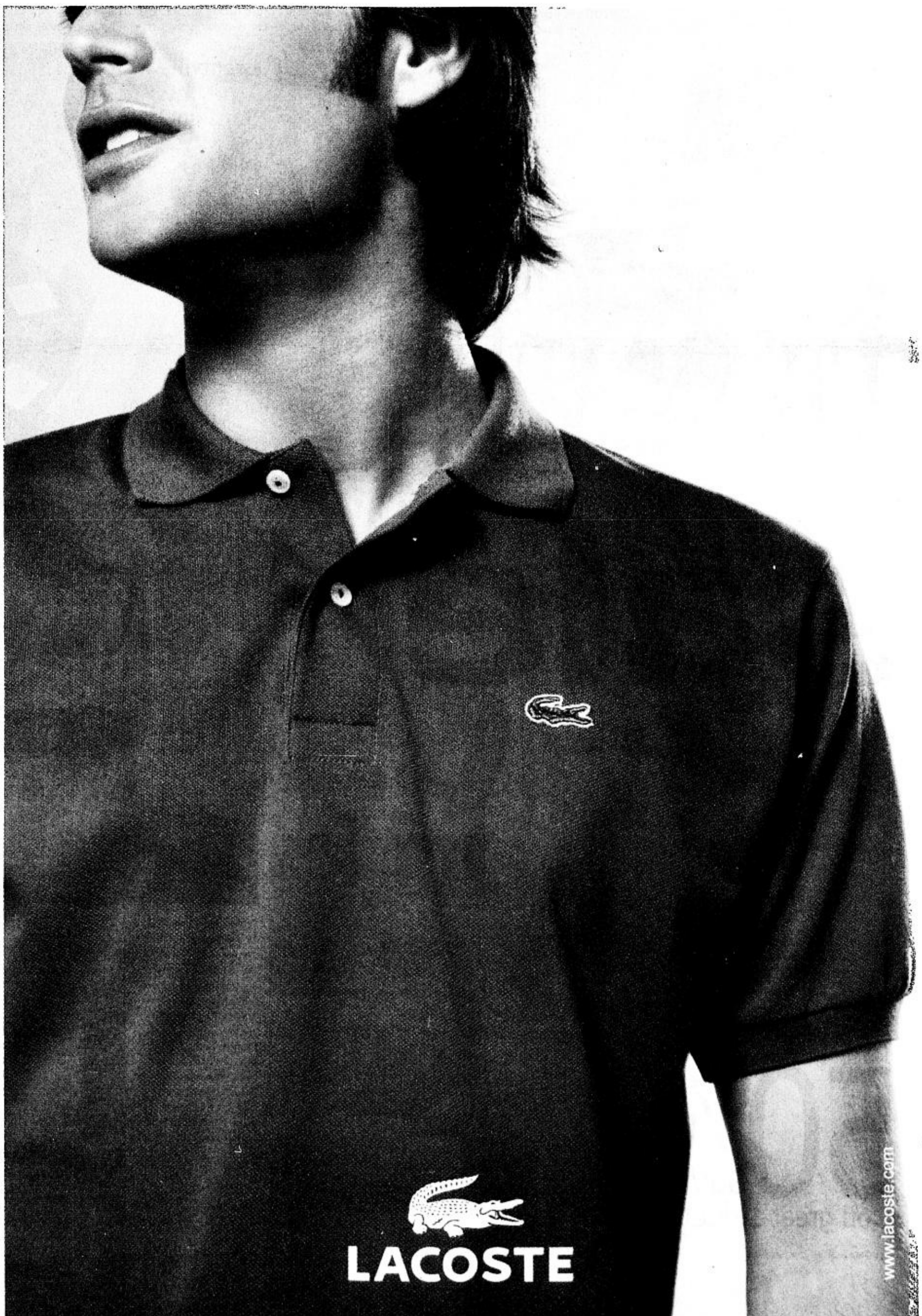
Three cuts of *kamagong*, each a different height from the other, stand in a group. Baby Girl notes the beauty of the "natural formation of the black on the brown." The drama of this species of *kamagong*—the black looks like ink spots that have run down the brown "wall" of the wood—is called "Tiger" by those who know their old wood.

"People are going back to the basics. They seem to want to simplify their lives," says Baby Girl. "They are paring down. Some are turning to eastern philosophy, to Zen, to Buddhism. Some are going back to Christianity, some are being 'Born Again.' This has continued into lifestyles as well." Yes, to hear interior designers say it today, people are turning away from an excess of material things.

In her own home, Baby Girl says she has edited out a lot of clutter: Some have gone to her daughter, some have been stored, ready to take their turn when those in use are ready to take a rest.

"My house is a calming home, it is a healing home. It's so simple, it's bare. I just have two big paintings on the walls. It's hard to take flight when there are so many things to bog you down. These are just material things. My spiritual environment has pushed me into this," she says.

THE HUNT/ p.G6



Let the Sunshine in

By Doris G. Nuyda
Contributor
Photos by Bobot Meru

BRENTVILLE is one of the new residential estates going up in Biñan, Laguna. A Filinvest Land project, it is so named because of its close affiliation with Brent International School whose newest branch is situated right in the estate premises and whose facilities it enjoys.

Brentville is an upscale neighborhood with all the amenities and facilities for comfortable living and a high quality of life that developers aim to enhance.

The complex is made up of wide avenues and spacious grounds divided into sections, each one with names like Prominence, West Parc, The Meridien, Woodmore Spring and Sunshine Place. These sections are surrounded by open spaces that bring in the beauty of nature and lots of cool breezes and fresh greenery.

A visit to Brentville recently brought us to the upmost level of quality living—Sunshine Place, site of three houses collectively called Classiques. The houses here have an average area of 345 sq m and are the stuff many people can only dream of. They have high ceilings, lots of windows for light and cross ventilation, spacious kitchens and bathrooms, and garden space all around.

The Mediterranean look inspired all three,

LET/ p.G3

KASSANDRA'S living room gets another high-ceiling treatment, dramatizing a staircase with wrought-iron railings. Center table is composed of two L-shaped, glass-topped pieces that can be rearranged as desired. Here, they form a cross, the hollow center occupied by a flower vase.

DINING room features armchairs of checkerboard wicker.

Brentville's Sunshine Place is generous with space, style and sun

FAMILY dining area with round table is set between formal dining room and kitchen, and opens to a side garden.

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FOR THE MASTER bedroom, architect/designer Arlen P. de Guzman chose an uncluttered, no-frills look, and favored Philippine wicker for headboard and bleached *abaca* blinds and lamps. Study room is at one corner with built-in shelves and worktable.

BATHROOM in master bedroom features black granite lavatory counter, wall-length mirror and shower stalls next to it.

FOR LARISSA'S reception area, designer Tina Periquet-Galicia chose wrought-iron sofa with rolled arms; a *sari* wall hanging is a conversation piece.

FOR THE GIRLS in the family, a room with twin beds, an aircon unit between them, camouflaged by lamp on night table. The curtain treatment is characterized by cast metal finials. The happy color scheme is a departure from the conventional beige or white.

Let the . . .

From page G2

evidenced by tiled roofs, grilled and balustraded second-story balconies overlooking trimmed lawns and flowering plants. It is a look growing increasingly popular in these tropical shores, and Classique homes may well be the models for a Pinoy-Med style.

While a slight difference in size characterizes the three, they have amenities in common besides the conventional formal living and dining rooms. They have three bedrooms each, for instance, that take up about one-third of the upper story floor space. They have breakfast nooks, two-car garages and study rooms in the master bedrooms.

There are also areas in the house and garden that may be easily turned into lanais for al fresco dining. Family rooms, also common to all three, serve as second living rooms tucked away for privacy, usually equipped with video and audio components. And, not the least consideration in all three are comfortable quarters for the house help.

The inclusion of a study or den next to the master bedroom is a concession to the needs of the head of the house who is likely to be the CEO or owner of his own company with responsibilities transcending office hours.

Interiors

The three Classique units are identified as Alexandria, Kassandra and Larissa. The first two were done by architect and design consultant Arlen P. de Guzman; the third, by Tina Periquet-Galicia, designer and lighting specialist.

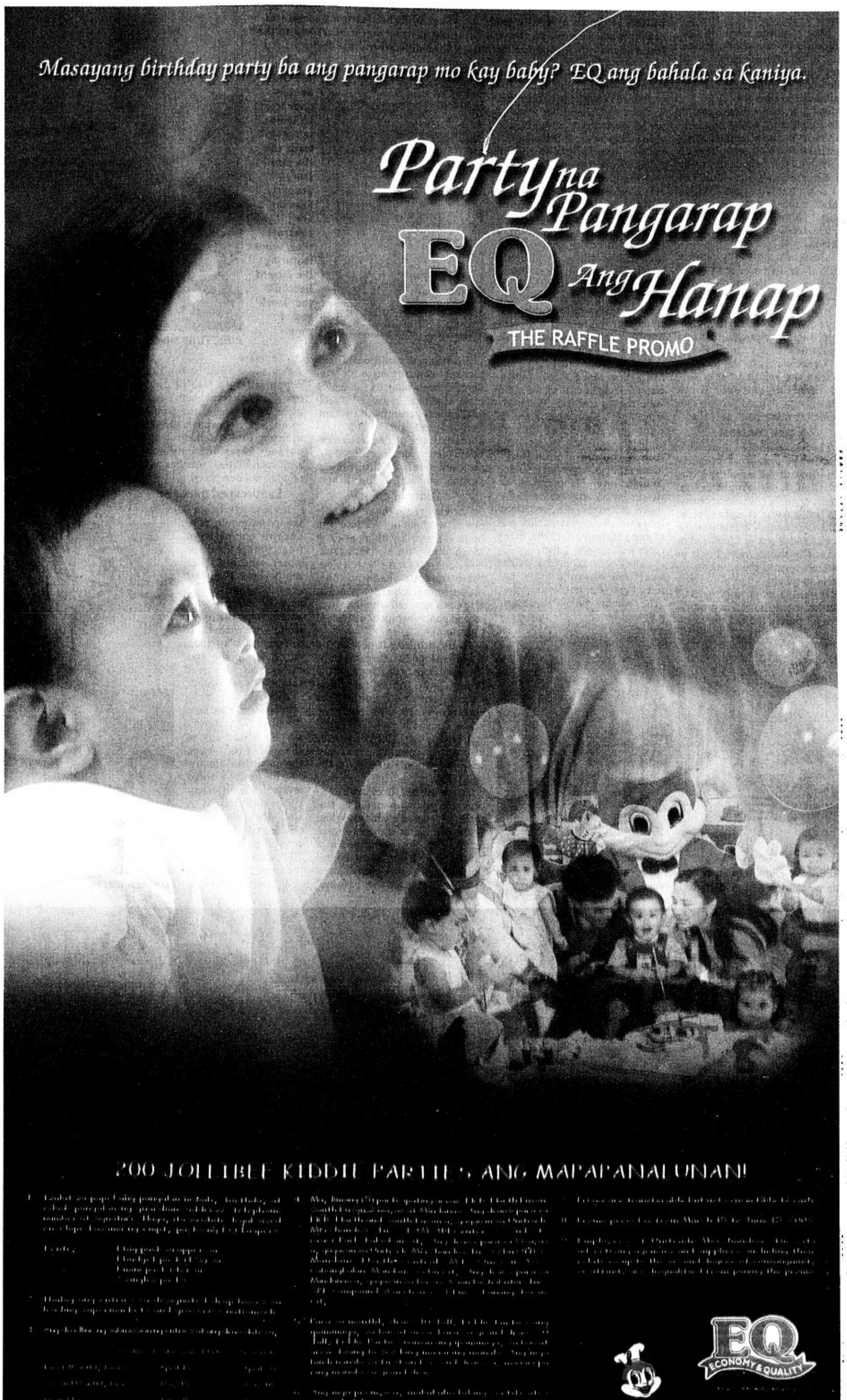
The interiors they've created for these model homes reveal elegant but practical possibilities offered by structure and floor plans. Indeed, new occupants could do well to make use of their ideas.

Alexandria is the smallest unit of the three. For this reason, wall-size mirrors are installed in strategic places to give the illusion of space. Mirrors, incidentally, seem to have taken over the role of paintings as wall décor for most of the three. The designers use paintings, of course, but smaller ones, carefully chosen for their provenance and to enhance atmosphere and color scheme.

Rooms on the first floor flow from entrance to exit unhindered by walls or doors. In Alexandria, for example, one walks from the *entresala* at the entrance directly to the living and dining rooms straight to the kitchen at the end. Often, only shelves serve to frame the entry point and delineate one area from another. Kitchens in Classique homes are meant as family hubs, and so are provided with space for easy movement necessary in cooking, and for get-togethers with family and friends. Entertaining in the kitchen, incidentally, is fast gaining social acceptance among modern families.

Families in Classique homes are likely to entertain in a variety of ways. So, besides indoor facilities for the purpose, these homes open up, through glass doors, to the garden or lanai for outdoor dinners or barbecues. Their suburban location makes it ideal for that purpose.

THIS bridgeway, with an impressive runner, connects the second-story family room to the master bedroom and overlooks the living room below. The wrought-iron railing exemplifies a classic design.



Going Greek in 'Spanish Mediterranean'

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Bobot Meru

IN AN EXCLUSIVE community of sprawling houses that straddle Peninsula de Punta Fuego's hilly terrain, one structure stands out from a distance: the Balatbats' big and lofty home that was inspired by a different part of the Mediterranean.

While most structures hew closely to the peninsula's Spanish Mediterranean theme, Fernando and Joy Balatbat chose to go Greek with an all-white abode with hints of cobalt blue on doors, window frames and cabinets. Aside from mirroring the sea and sky, the refreshing color combination also serves a practical purpose.

"Blue is said to ward off mosquitoes," says Joy, "while white is easy to maintain." How come? Greek homemakers simply apply a new coat of white paint once the walls start to turn gray.

Joy fell in love with this type of folk architecture while on a holiday in Nykolos, a famed tourist destination in Greece, several years ago. The peninsula's rocky terrain, surrounded on all sides by the sea reminding her of "God's work," looked very much like a coastal village in Greece, except for a few coconut trees dotting the horizon.

When the opportunity came to build their own weekend home three years ago, the couple spared no expense to recreate the look on a bigger, grander scale. They were able to do this with ample help from interior designer and good friend Sonny Liwanag.

"Greek houses by the Mediterranean are smaller," says Joy. "Ours isn't an authentic Greek home, but a stylized version that melded various elements."

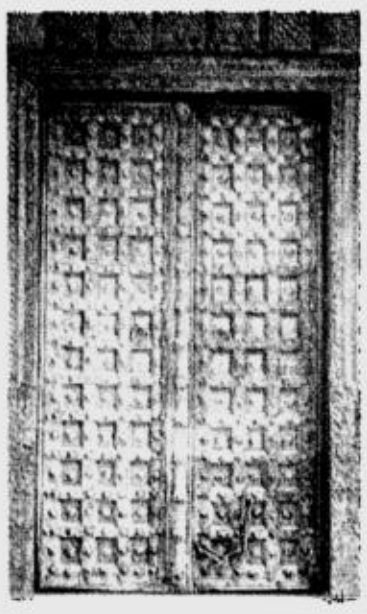
Stark contrast

The heavy double doors that lead to the four-story property came from an old temple in India. As if the doors' ornate design wasn't enough, Liwanag accented the jambs with concrete tiles he himself designed. It features the face of Bacchus, the Greek god of wine. The showy assembly is in stark contrast to the entire structure's simplicity.

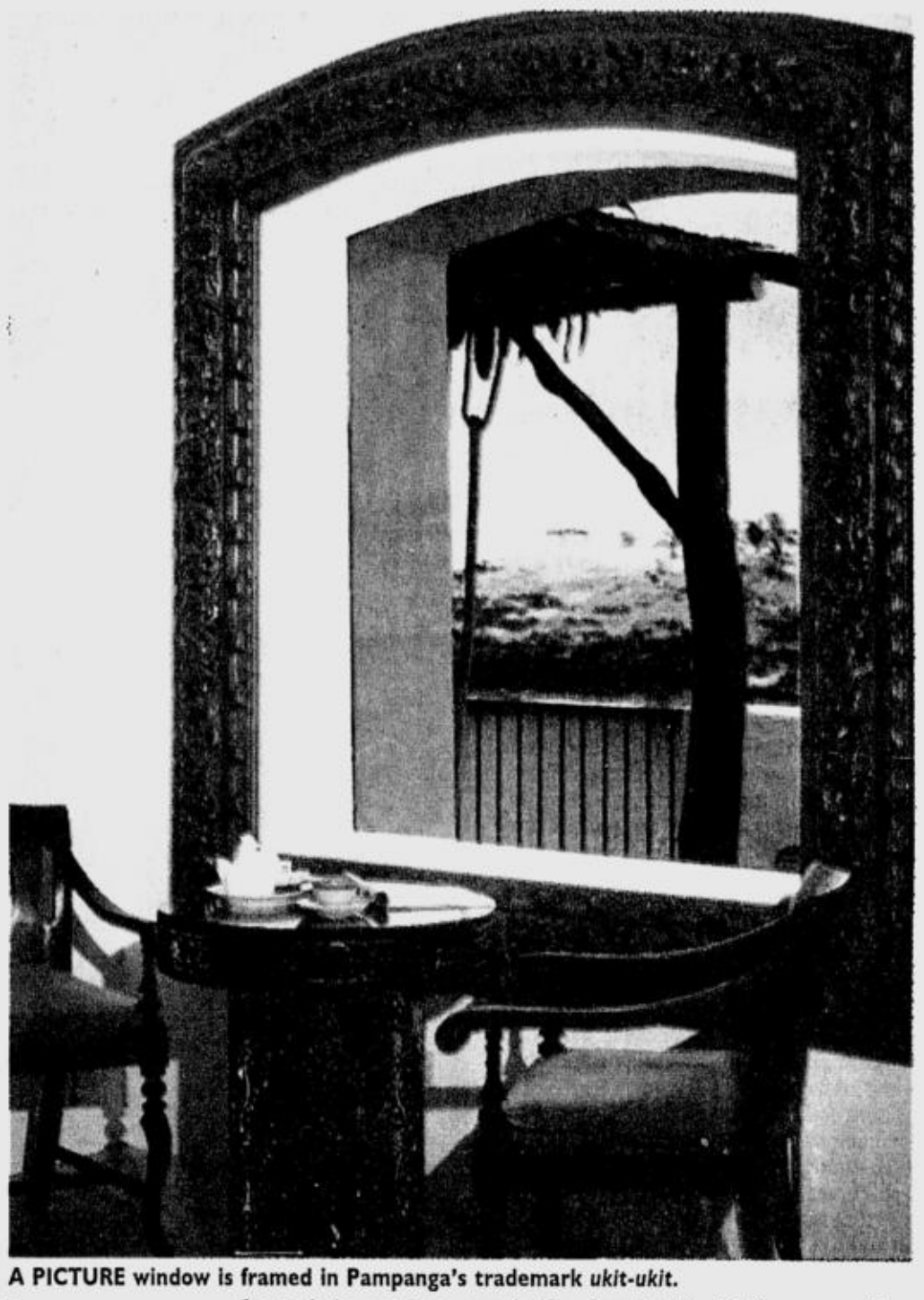
"It's still a work in progress," says Joy as she showed us around. "I've purposely limited the number of furniture pieces to maximize the space." She has wisely eschewed heavy padded furniture in favor of tall, slender wooden pieces befitting a home by the sea. Floors and countertops are made of sturdy Spanish tiles in beige. "Every item in this house is low-maintenance and easy to clean," she says.

BEAMS soften an otherwise solid ceiling, while a recess on the wall features the wife's bottle collection.

AN ALL-WHITE interior need not be boring. A touch of drama is reserved for the spiral staircase with steps made of *traviesa* and wrought iron handrails that resemble waves. Several niches featuring sculptures and abstract works of art add to the Greek-Mediterranean feel.



AN OLD double door from an Indian temple leads to the four-story property. Framing it are concrete tiles, some featuring the face of Bacchus, the Greek god of wine.



A PICTURE window is framed in Pampanga's trademark *ukit-ukit*.

Huge picture windows, one framed in Pampanga's trademark *ukit-ukit*, offer awesome vistas of the sea and nearby islets. The living room's ceiling, including a concave portion made of bricks and adorned with multicolored gas lamps, is painted white like most of the walls. Nature is reflected in the undulating black handrails by the stairs that, says Joy, resemble the waves.

The spiral staircase has its share of drama as well. For one, a dome-shaped skylight crowns the stairwell. Niches featuring either abstract art pieces or a Greek female figure are strategically placed along the staircase. Minimalism rules in the choice of accent pieces. Elements that caught our attention included several empty wine bottles resting on ledges above the living room's picture windows. Decorative wooden beams that line part of the ceiling impart the living room with a tropical feel.

"They're inexpensive at the same time romantic," says Joy, referring to her bottle collection. "They remind me of 'Message in a Bottle.'"

GREEK and Filipino touches converge in the lanai: A screen of tree trunks, column and giant outdoor vase are found.

A *kendima* or traditional Greek blanket featuring huge embroidered flowers hang by the dining area. Like most seasoned travelers, Joy has accumulated a number of items during her trips abroad. A set of decorative ceramic plates from Florence, Italy, another lovely Mediterranean destination, hang by the kitchen.

Hints of color

The kitchen, by the way, is only one of two areas in the house with hints of color. Joy didn't attempt to whitewash the kitchen's vaulted ceiling. All for the better, since the terra-cotta shade not only makes for a warmer kitchen, but also contrasts well with the kitchen and pantry cabinets' distressed blue doors.

As the property is perched on a gentle slope, what seems to be the first floor, consisting of the living room, dining room and kitchen, accessed from the front entrance, is actually already the house's second level. The spiral staircase by the living room leads down to a covered lanai and swimming pool, and up to the bedrooms.

The lanai features a built-in concrete sofa with matching leatherette-covered cushions. White again dominates the area except for throw pillows wrapped in a rainbow of bright and pastel shades. "They're as multicolored as the sails of boats that pass by," Joy explains.

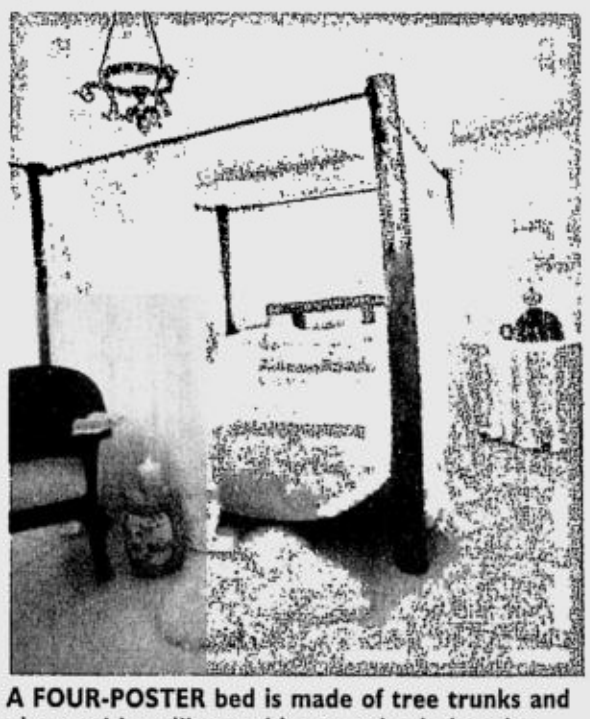
A glass-topped coffee table supported by a slab of *piedra china* acts as a focal point. Several giant clams accent the tropical setup. Again, Liwanag succeeds in fusing Greek elements—huge outdoor vases and columns—with such Filipino touches as irregular wooden poles.

Landscaped paradise

It's hard to miss the irregularly shaped swimming pool despite competition from a bigger body of water—the big, blue sea beyond. The pool area is a landscaped paradise teeming with hardy plants that have somehow withstood the peninsula's strong winds, harsh sun and sandy soil. It's not sunny all year round, of course.

"You should see how this place is like during a typhoon," says Joy, as she points to the sea from a picture window on the house's third level. "It's a different, yet beautiful sight as well. Sprays of water obscure the view, but I can still make out 10 to 20-ft waves as they hit the shore."

A picture window framed in various seashells sourced locally again proves Joy's artistic bent. She had collected them over the years before sticking them on her intended targets. She later lined a smaller version, a picture frame with a photo of her and her husband as newlyweds, with smaller seashells from the Mediterranean. "See how bigger, prettier and more diverse our seashells are compared to those found in the Mediterranean," the part-time artist declares.



A FOUR-POSTER bed is made of tree trunks and obscured by willowy white curtains in keeping with the mistress' simple yet tasteful choice of furniture pieces.

A family room leads to a guestroom and the master bedroom. There are two extra rooms on the second level. Again, the master bedroom is a picture of simplicity. A four-poster bed fashioned from logs crowned with translucent drapes is the bedroom's focal point.

Another spiral staircase by the porch leads to the roof deck, with the dome-shaped skylight in the middle. No one has yet complained that the couple violated the community's imposed design by doing away with the de rigueur shingles for the roof, and Joy thinks she has no reason to worry or feel apologetic about.

"We would have gone against it had we used something else," she says, "but all you see here are floors. This house has no roof to begin with." Not in a technical sense, of course, otherwise there would have been no roof to shield the Balatbats from the beauty as well as fury of "God's work."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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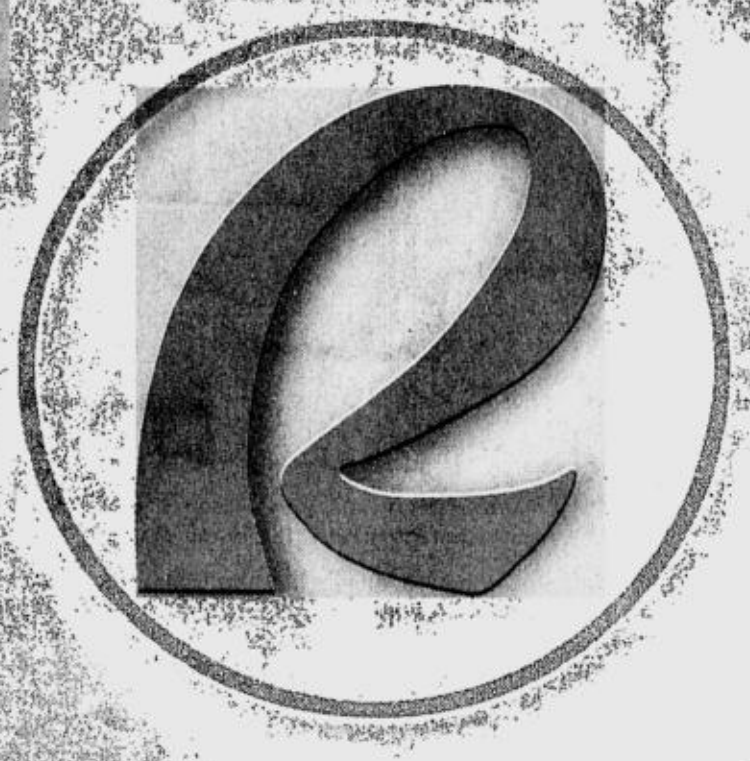

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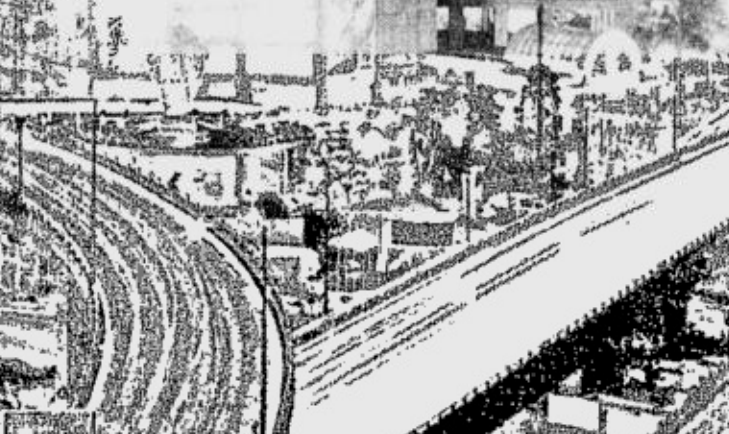

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Promo offers fashionable watches for free

HANG Ten Phils., a casual apparel brand, offers its fashionable wristwatch for free with every minimum single receipt purchase of P800.

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The hunt for home style

From page G1

However, Baby Girl's minimalism is not stark as to be uncomfortable. Hers is a "watered-down" minimalism clothed with her version of aesthetics. She has hand-me-down furniture inherited from her grandmother. She likes the play of drama from wood in her home. And though two to three years ago she used to do a lot of the color-dominated Mediterranean look (think terra cotta and Tuscan yellow, for instance) today the walls in her home are all in white.

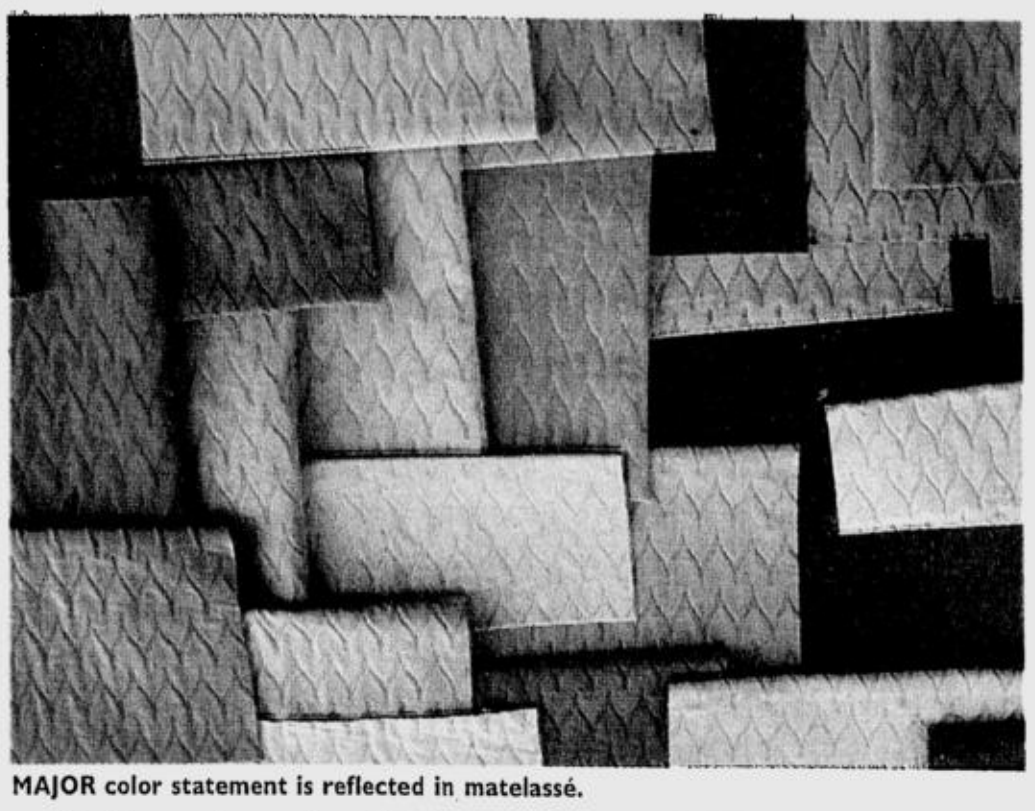
Solid

A console table has a solid slab of *molave* for a top, a piece her grandmother gave her in the '60s. She also has an old, weather-beaten mortar.

On weekends, her "therapy" is "doing flower arrangements in my house." She likes working with, per arrangement, only one or two unusual flowers, mainly tropical blooms which she buys from Anna, a flower vendor at the weekend market at Tesda in Bicutan.

Baby Girl likes to name today's style as "Asian fusion" or even "high Filipino" style which can successfully blend with Chinese, Cambodian, Burmese and other Asian things in a single setting.

Donghia, a New York-based design house for fabrics and furnishings and represented locally by Artemis, recently unveiled its new line of fabrics for Filipino homes, fabrics going by such interesting names as Pacific Shells inspired by such objects found on the beach, Housepets for a fabric that features white-eyed dark brown dogs against a light brown background, and other upholstery fabric designs inspired by things in nature such as exotic ferns, a burst of pink bougainvillea flowers, even tree bark.



MAJOR color statement is reflected in matelassé.

Donghia has also taken "fabrics that have a fashion attitude to them and reengineered them, making them modern and correct tactilely, or wonderful to touch." And so Donghia carries silk in all its "fresh and exciting" presence in Silkwood and its Obi Collection inspired by handmade antique Japanese textiles, and the look and feel of silk and linen in Wildly Chic.

Donghia has also come out with its first collection of trim to "personalize your environment."

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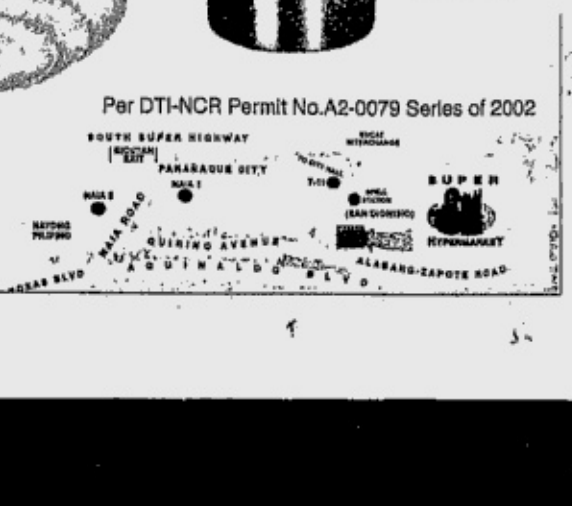
Per DTI-NCR Permit No.A2-0079 Series of 2002



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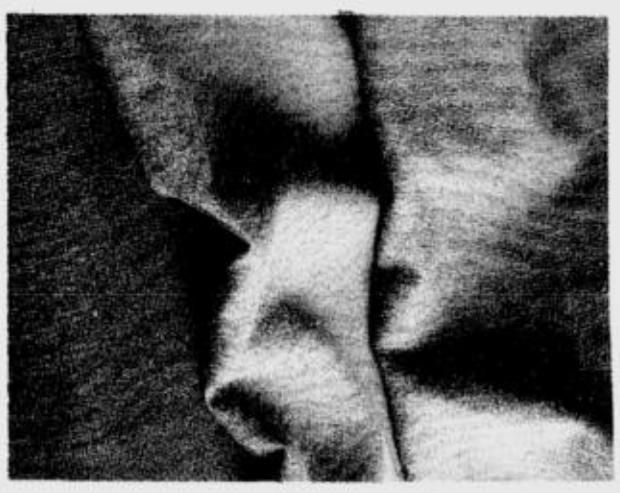
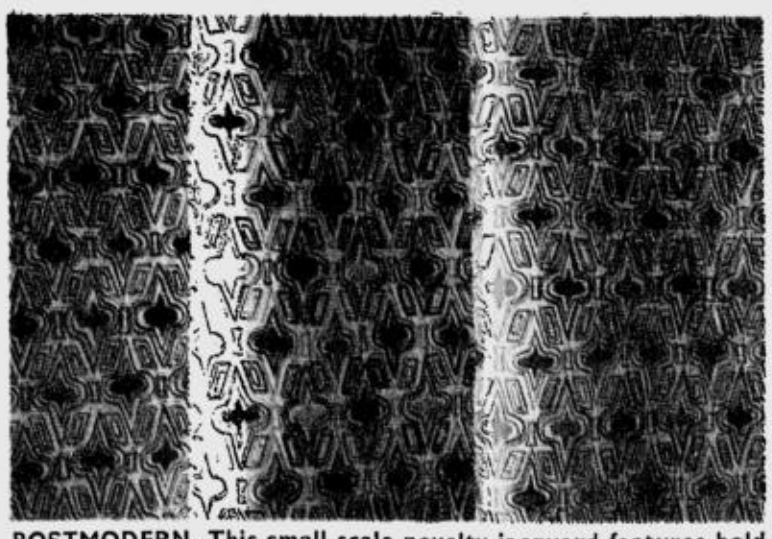
MOODS and rhythms of Eastern Africa showing tone-on-tone abstractions, nubby striations, solid earth tones and *tapa*-cloth patterns. Iridescent. The glistening hues of the silk and polyester blend collection is characterized by neutral colorways with a subtle luster that reflects the light.

RICH AND EARTHY. An oversized jacquard moiré with a large-scale pattern reflects the movement of flowing water.





POSTMODERN. This small-scale novelty jacquard features bold movement and inventive colors reminiscent of the '50s and '60s.

Seminars on fashion design

CANADIAN-BORN graphic and fashion design consultant Claudine Cloutier will conduct a series of courses on fashion graphic design in April and May.

The seminar series, to be held at 2/F Trafalgar Plaza, H.V. de la Costa, Salcedo Village, Makati, can open opportunities for individuals who want to start a new hobby or gain better understanding of the design field.

Cloutier has a rich international experience in the fields of fashion and graphic design which she acquired from stints in France, Malaysia and, now, the Philippines.

Topics include: Fashion accessories 1 (April 2-3), fashion accessories 2 (April 4-5), fashion portfolio preparation (April 8-19), experimental fashion drawings (April 22 to May 3), computers for fashion (May 6-17).

The graphic courses will cover branding and corporate identity (April 8-19, April 22 to May 3), and advanced graphic layouts and portfolio presentation (May 6-17).

The courses are open to participants of all ages. Certificates of attendance will be given upon completion of courses.

Call 819-1001/1992, fax 810-2825 or e-mail claudine@intered.com.

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WHEN the first Lising Crafts Inc. factory was inaugurated in 1960, among the sponsors were Lily Padilla, Luz Magsaysay and Ramon Valera, pictured with Pete on the left and Ched on the right.

This lamp house shines brighter at 48

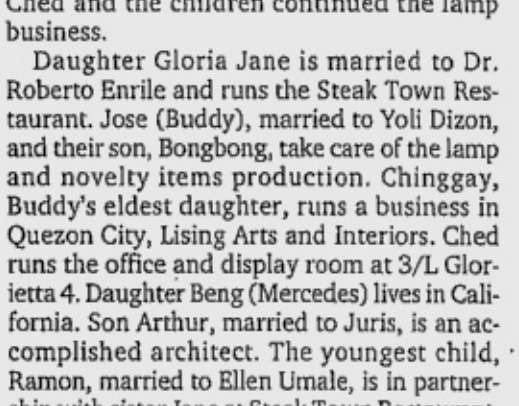
LISING Crafts, a leading lamp manufacturer, will celebrate its 48th anniversary today until March 31.

Forty-eight years ago, Pete and Ched opened a small lamp store on Taft Avenue, opposite the Philippine General Hospital. As it prospered, it moved to a commercial area on A. Mabini Street, Ermita. The Lising facilities expanded further with the construction of a lamp factory in Makati, first at a smaller place on Dian Street near Buendia Avenue, then to a bigger place on Pasong Tamo Extension close to Fort Bonifacio. Lising then constructed a commercial building at Makati Commercial Center (Lising Commercial House), which stood from 1970-1993. It is now part of the Glorietta.

Pete, Ched and their children, who grew up with the business, had run the business together. When Pete passed away in 1993, Ched and the children continued the lamp business.

Daughter Gloria Jane is married to Dr. Roberto Enrile and runs the Steak Town Restaurant. Jose (Buddy), married to Yoli Dizon, and their son, Bongbong, take care of the lamp and novelty items production. Chinggay, Buddy's eldest daughter, runs a business in Quezon City, Lising Arts and Interiors. Ched runs the office and display room at 3/L Glorietta 4. Daughter Beng (Mercedes) lives in California. Son Arthur, married to Juris, is an accomplished architect. The youngest child, Ramon, married to Ellen Umale, is in partnership with sister Jane at Steak Town Restaurant, and is also busy with his Koi (Japanese Carp fish) craft, which started as a hobby.

Highlight of the anniversary will be the reduced prices for all purchases, plus a free candy bag lamp (a famous creation of Lising). Call Lising Crafts at 893-4810, 892-6027 and 728-9398/99.



MOBILE symphony lamp

BUBBLE lamp, first introduced by Lising Crafts

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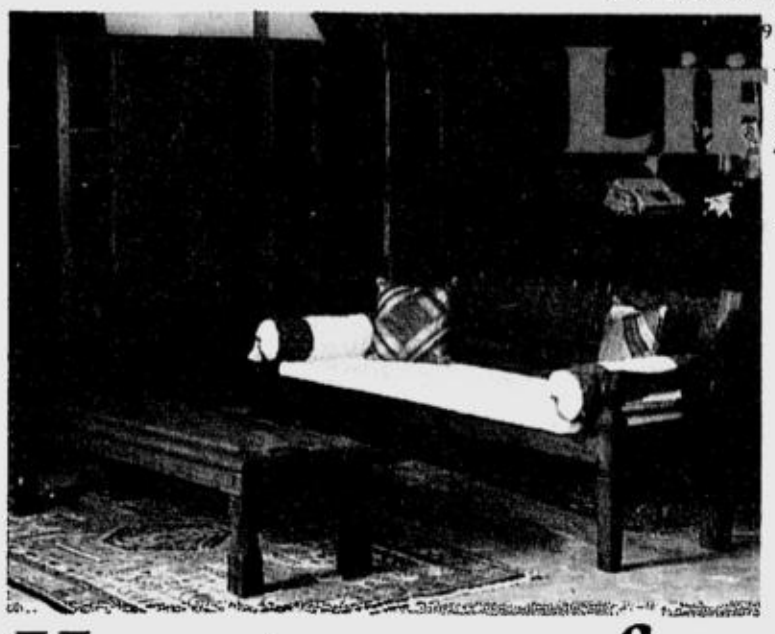

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THE BEAUTY of antique boxes that have been waxed and tended carefully reflects loving care by many people over the years. Here are some tips for keeping your wood antiques in the best possible condition.

- Boxes and other little wood antiques should be dusted very lightly with a soft, dry brush or small dust rag. However, a dust rag has loose threads that can catch on pieces of veneer or marquetry, pulling them off. Be very careful if you do.
- Never use anything that has a rough texture to it—it might actually scratch the wood you are trying to preserve. Avoid feather dusters, too.
- Remember to take the dust off the piece entirely. This may sound silly, but a lot of times, when an object has wax on it, you just move the dust around.
- Always use good quality paste wax. Just apply little at a time, rubbing softly, following the grain of the wood to build up the deep layered finish your wood deserves. The patina on a wood object or piece of furniture is very important and must be nurtured.
- Use a very soft cloth for waxing. Cheesecloth is excellent. Do not overdo the amount of wax you use. Spread on a thin, even coat and rub evenly and gently in order to have a good finish, one that will seal and protect the wood underneath.
- Be gentle when waxing. If a piece of veneer or inlay comes loose, save it. Such pieces are irreplaceable; substitutes are impossible to find. The pieces should be tucked away in a safe place, then brought to a furniture or wood expert to restore.
- Many wood antiques have some kind of metal ornamentation—brass keyholes or knobs, ormolu or other decoration. These bits of metal should not be polished with any metal-cleaning product. By polishing the metal, you may damage the wood underneath. Instead, just dust them carefully several times a year.
- If your house or apartment is damp, use a humidifier. Wood responds to changes in temperature and humidity. It swells or shrinks and can warp and split. So try to avoid extremes in temperature and make sure your wood objects do not dry out or become too damp.

Visit the Orientique showroom at Warehouse 7, near Pines and Sheridan Streets, Mandaluyong City.

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A glimpse back, a leap forward

Heave a sigh of relief. And after that, take a deep breath. You've reached the end of another major phase of your undergraduate career. That's a relief. But you're now going to put your foot forward somewhere. And that needs a deep breath from you.

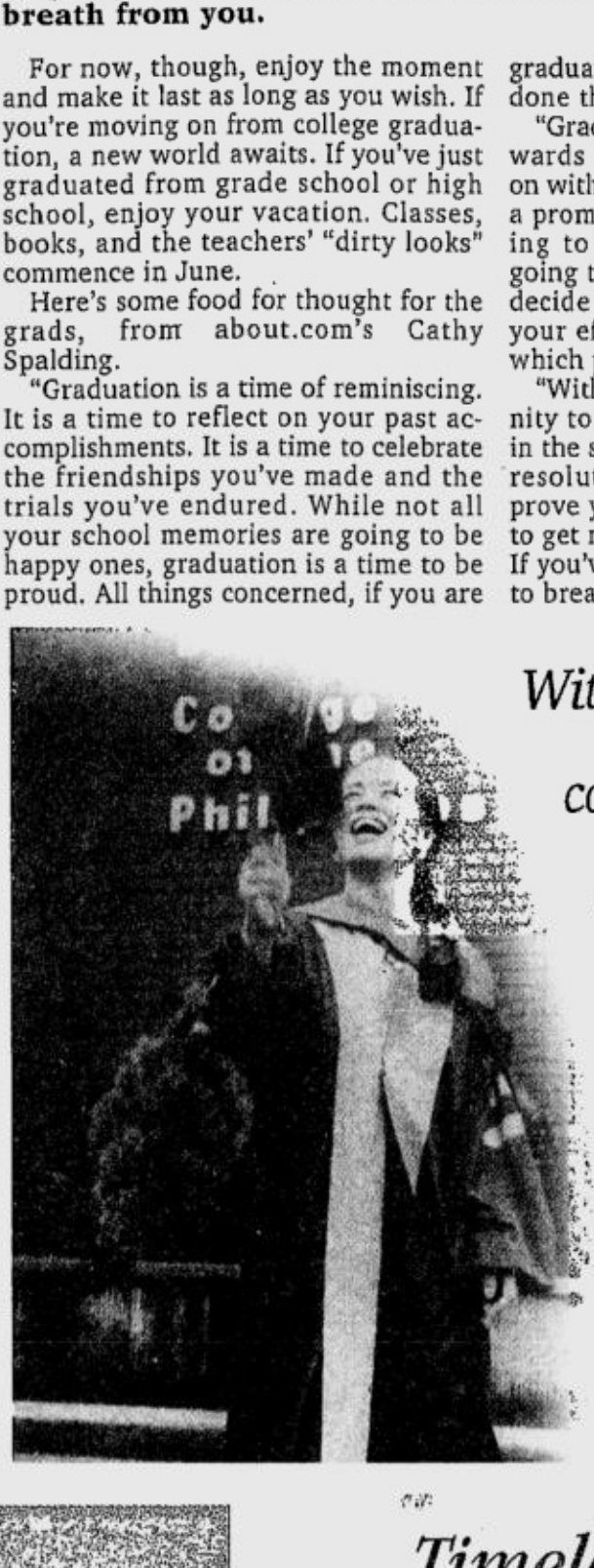
For now, though, enjoy the moment and make it last as long as you wish. If you're moving on from college graduation, a new world awaits. If you've just graduated from grade school or high school, enjoy your vacation. Classes, books, and the teachers' "dirty looks" commence in June.

Here's some food for thought for the grads, from about.com's Cathy Spalding.

"Graduation is a time of reminiscing. It is a time to reflect on your past accomplishments. It is a time to celebrate the friendships you've made and the trials you've endured. While not all your school memories are going to be happy ones, graduation is a time to be proud. All things concerned, if you are graduating, you have worked hard and done the job well.

"Graduation is also a time to look towards the future. Are you continuing on with further education? Do you have a promising job prospect? Are you going to do some travelling? Are you going to take a year off from school to decide where you want to concentrate your efforts? It is up to you to decide which path you want to choose.

"With graduation comes the opportunity to make some changes. Look at it in the same light as making New Year's resolutions. Take this chance to improve your work ethic, or make a vow to get more involved in other activities. If you've been in a rut, now is the time to break out of it."



With graduation comes the opportunity to make some changes. Look at it in the same light as making New Year's resolutions

Timeless gifts from Michelis

ANOTHER MILESTONE approaches our children's lives as the school year comes to a close. These are the precious moments that would be etched forever in our children's memories – things we all went through back in our time. Who could forget prom night? The grad ball? And of course, the graduation ceremonies?

These occasions require only the best mementos to celebrate such important milestones. And among gift choices, one valuable asset should always shine: jewelry.

Michelis Gifts and Jewellery, the country's finest maker of sterling silver jewelry, offers jewelry sets for the graduates.

To celebrate these moments, Michelis offers freshwater pearls as excellent gift item jewelry. A set of earrings, necklace, ring, and bracelet accented by freshwater pearls is perfect because of their classic designs.

Freshwater pearls are pure pearls because only tissue is used to start its growth. Michelis also strives to maintain timeless and elegant jewelry pieces that will be an ideal accessory for ladies who are enjoying their graduation or prom night. These can even be used and treasured for years onwards because of their classic appeal.

For the boys, cuff links will be a flattering adornment to their suits as they march for their graduation rites. After the ceremonies, they can wear attractive studs at grad parties that will give them that "rebelliously cool" look.

Buyers can choose from Michelis' wide range of chains, rings, bracelets and other exquisite jewelry pieces which are surprisingly affordable not just for the stylish but for avid collectors as well.

Michelis' also offers colored stones that can bring out more variety and creativity among wearers. Each colored stone has the same quality finish found in Michelis' sterling silver creations – guaranteed to possess a minimum 92.5 to 95.2-percent level of purity required by the international market, and crafted according to European standards. Among the in demand stones are citrine, peridot, topaz, and amethyst.

Michelis' jewelry collection is on display at its shop in Greenbelt and at the upper lobby of the Manila Peninsula.

5-star hotels treat the graduates

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza salutes the graduates of 2002 with exciting offers and rewards to start them off on the path to success. A minimum eight persons celebrating graduation get a gift certificate for an overnight stay for two in a Superior room.

Celebrate graduation at China Sea with Westin's mouth-watering eight-course graduation set menu as a fitting reward to the graduate's hard work for only P1,250 per person.

Give the Graduate more reasons to say cheese by commemorating his or her moment in Italian style at Alfiere. Avail of the delectable pre-fixe menu good for eight at P750 per person.

Treat the graduate to a sumptuous lunch or dinner buffet of international favorites at Café Plaza. Better yet, treat the whole bunch for only P880 per person.

Avail of these graduation promotions from March 11 to April 14. For reservations, call (632) 551-5555.

Hotel Inter-Continental Manila, meanwhile, treats the graduates with their own special room rate for local residents of P3,000++ per night in a Deluxe Room inclusive of breakfast buffet for two persons. Valid from March 15 to April 15 for single or double occupancy, graduates may avail of this discounted rate upon presentation of their school diploma upon check-in. Call 815-9711 local 373-377 for room reservations.

Graduates who want to celebrate with a grand feast of delightful food and drinks may drop by the hotel's restaurant outlets from March 15 to April 15 for the following exciting offerings.

A graduate with a group of 10 persons or more (all partaking of the lunch/dinner buffet) at the Café Jeepney will receive one gift certificate worth P500 of food and beverage at the hotel and one free cake upon presentation of a diploma.

Upon presentation of his diploma, a college graduate will be treated to bottomless San Miguel Draft beer and pica-pica during Happy Hour at Le Boulevardier when with a group of 10 persons or more.

At the Prince Albert Rotisserie, a graduate with a group of 10 persons or more (all partaking of the chef's special three-course set menu) will receive one gift certificate worth P750 of food and beverage at the hotel and one free cake upon presentation of a diploma. Dial 819-0654 for restaurant reservations.

Special rates for private graduation parties and catering are also being offered. Call Banquet Sales for inquiries on outside catering at 815-9711 (local 271).

For graduation gift-giving made easier, gift certificates for room accommodation or food and beverage may be purchased at the Business Center (local 224).

Graduations can be bittersweet

Graduations can be bittersweet,
Reminding us of all
that's come and gone.
All our battles, whether
lost or won,
Days of bliss, and days we
would delete.
Underneath our pride there
is the sense,
Almost like a wound
of something past.
The beauty of a time that
cannot last,
In which we shared the joys
of innocence.
Open vistas lie before our eyes,
Now is the time for hopes
and for goodbyes.

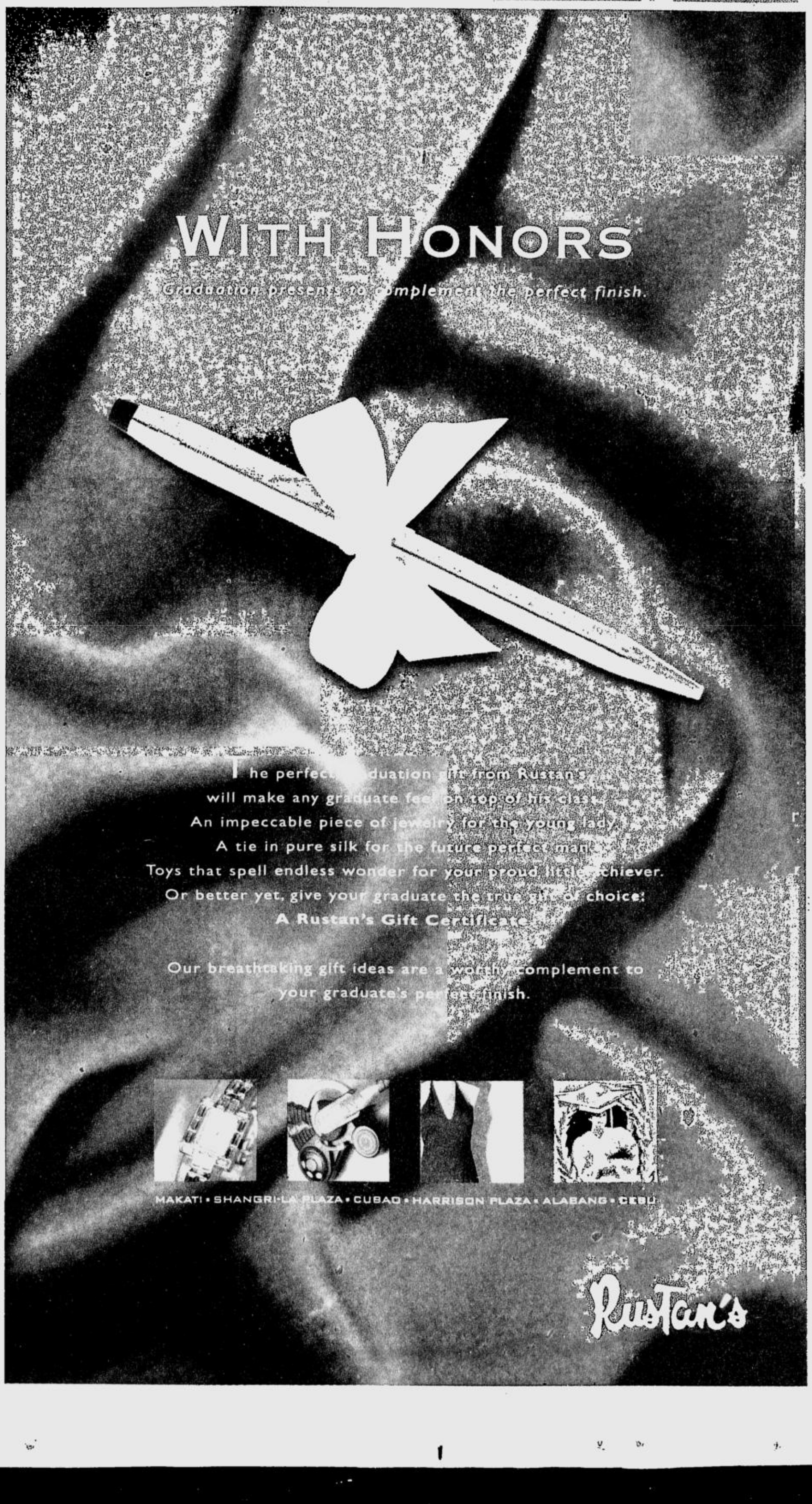
(From about.com)

NJC gives grads cool image

NAUTICA JEANS Company (NJC) revives the classic as it combines the logos and prints of the old high varsity days with the modern, bold and athletic look for its Spring 2002 Men's Collection.

NJC offers a strong fashion variety of jeans, T-shirts, and cargo pants that come in various cuts and designs using a wide range of color palettes. Highlights include Vintage look blends with prints that will definitely inspire the free-spirited youth.

NJC's Spring 2002 Men's Collection is now available at the ground floor of Glorietta 4, at the second floor of the Shangri-la Plaza Mall and Commerce Mall at the Alabang Town Center.



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The dash to 50 in step with customers' needs

By Joel V. Nigos

SAVING money for you to buy that much-needed appliance in the house has always been a hassle. Before you know it, your little son has to enroll again in school and you have to forego once more your plan of buying that washing machine. You also can't prevent emergencies from happening. Again, you have to shell out that little money you've been keeping to finance those immediate needs.

Looking for a place to buy your favorite appliance from is also an added burden. Traffic has become heavier; traveling from one place to another is tedious and you feel that there are no appliance stores close to home. *"Saka na lang* (I'll do it later)," you think, not realizing that you've been foregoing and foregoing that chance of owning an appliance.

Emilio S. Lim Appliances (Esla), the pioneer in appliance installment plan, understands these concerns. And for 35 years now, the company has been coming up with new innovations and services to address these and help its customers finally own appliances.

According to Robert R. Lim, general manager and chief executive officer of Esla, one of the steps the company took in order to reach out to people is the opening up of new branches.

"This has become an advantage for us. We now have a large network of branches and they are fully equipped with all the appliance brands. We also have lots of inventories so buyers have a wide variety of choices," says Robert.

The opening of Esla's 50th outlet is a testament to our thrust to reach out to our customers

In fact, he says, Esla had only seven branches up until 1993. In 1994, he initiated the opening up of one branch after another. Rapid expansion followed. Now, Esla would be opening its 50th store.

"The opening of Esla's 50th outlet is a testament to our thrust to reach out to our customers. We feel that there should be an Esla branch close to them," explains Robert.

The new Esla store would be opened today, March 15, and is located along Commonwealth Avenue beside Ever-Gotesco. This would complement Esla's chain of stores which spans the whole of Luzon and the metropolis.

For his part, Albert Lim, Esla's chief operating officer, says that Esla would derive a lot from this expansion.

"As we grow to 50 stores now, we will have the benefits of economics-of-scale operations. We expect an additional volume in sales. In turn, our volume discounts would be higher from our suppliers because we would be able to purchase more from them," he explains.

Besides the establishment of new branches, Esla is now also relocating some of its outlets to maximize its presence and make them more profitable.

"We have transferred our Edsa-Cubao outlet to P. Tuazon, beside Ali Mall in the Cubao commercial district," says Robert.

He adds that Esla has also begun changing the look of the stores for it to become more attractive to customers.

"Our thrust in operations is to be able to standardize our stores. They should have similar displays, in comfortable

DASH/17

ESLA-Operation managers and internal auditors with Roberto 'Jimmy' Lim, CEO (ninth from left) and Albert R. Lim COO (eighth from left). Operation managers (from left) Romeo Escaro Jr., Marlon Bordeos, Deogracia Abella, Glen Leyva, Exequiel Navarro, Teofilo Fernandez, and Ellen Figueroa. Internal auditors Rosita Pascua, Asuncion Gawat, Leonida Gawat, Angeli Bermio, Marissa Navales, Patricia Landicho.

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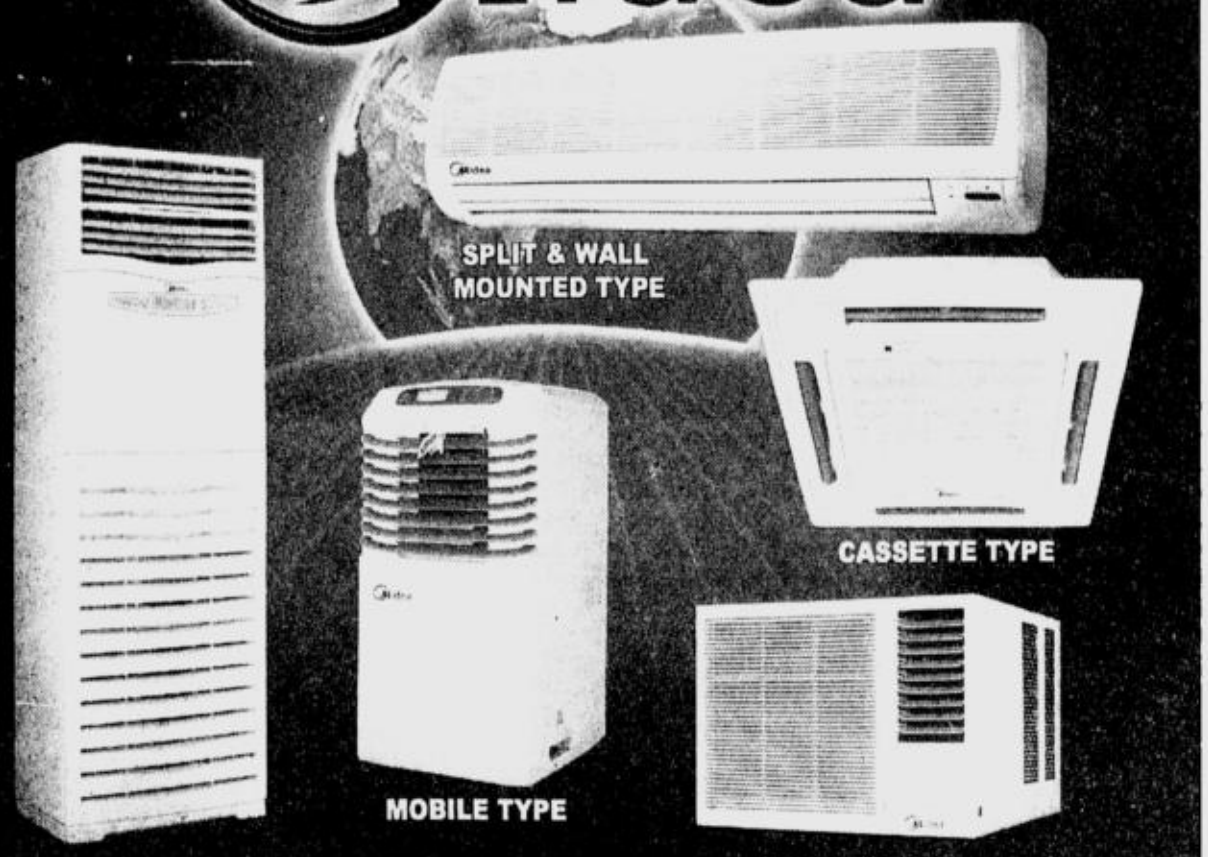

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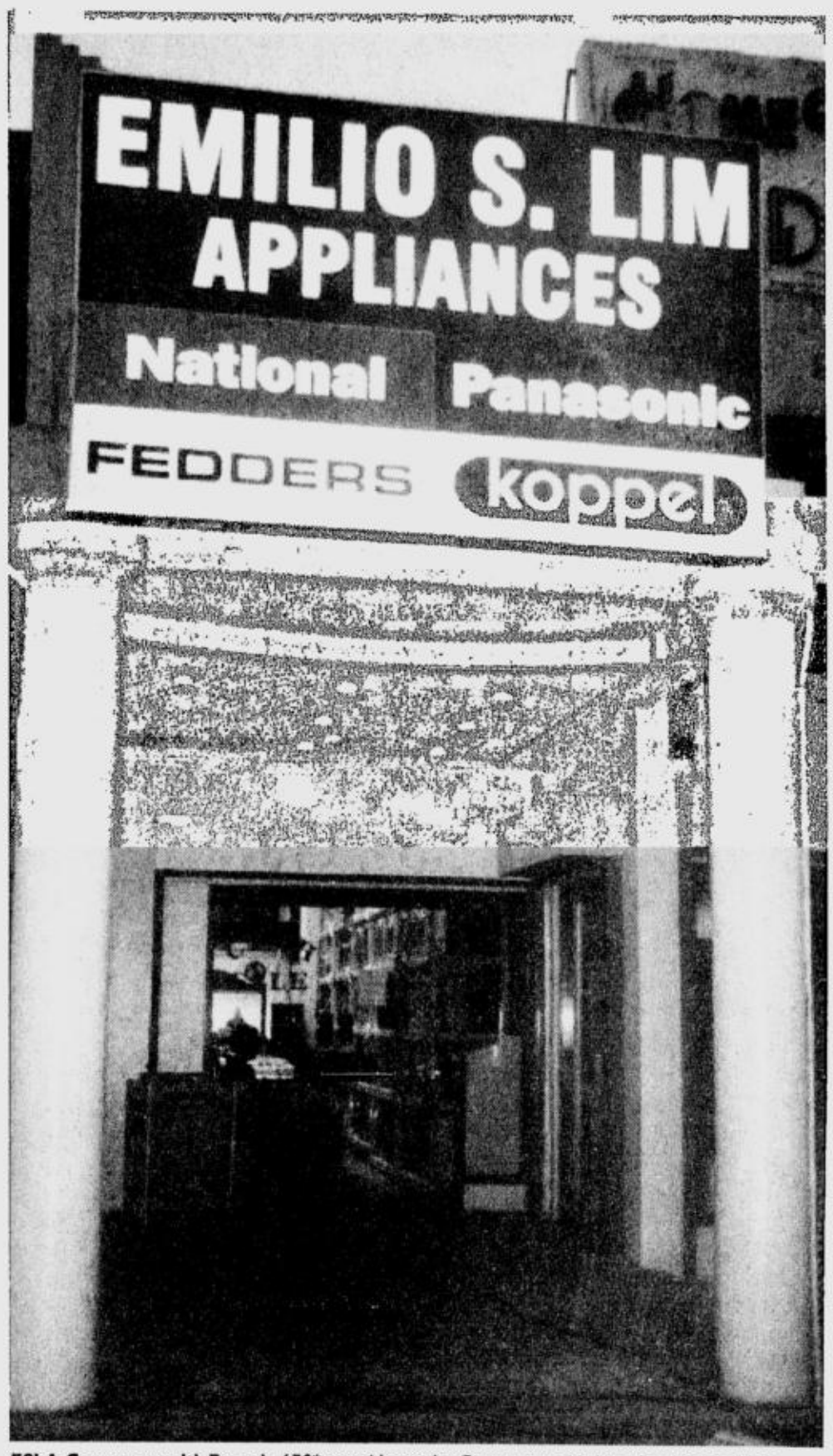

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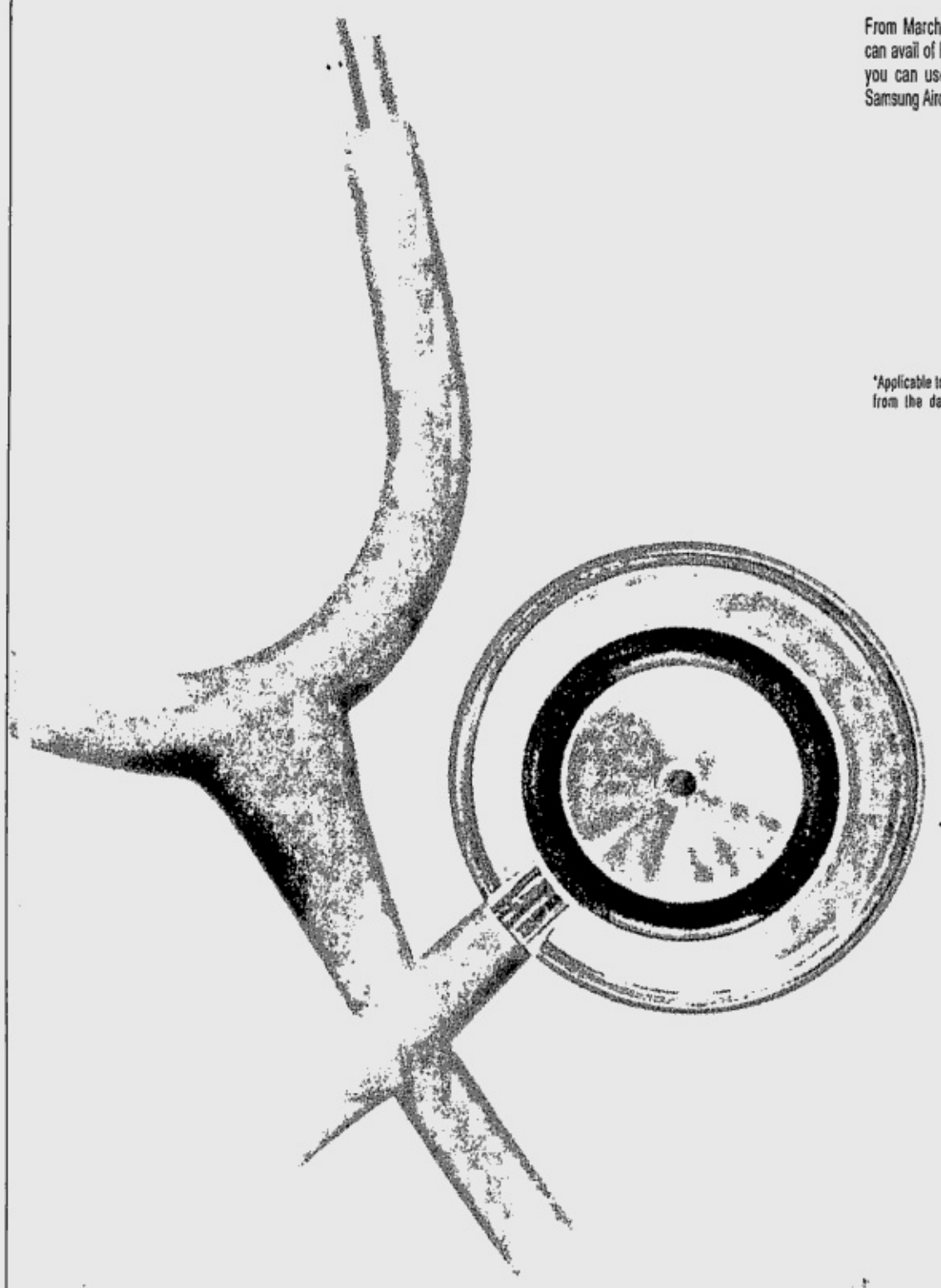

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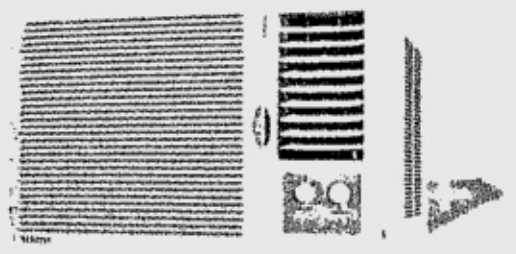

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0919-217-1225

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13 **CAINTA ORTIGAS** G & T Place Km. 20 Ortigas Ave.Ext.
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0919-285-1980

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0917-496-7493

17 **DASMARIÑAS II** Congressional Ave., Burol
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35 **NOVALICHES PROPER** # 1035 Quirino Hi-way Sta.Monica
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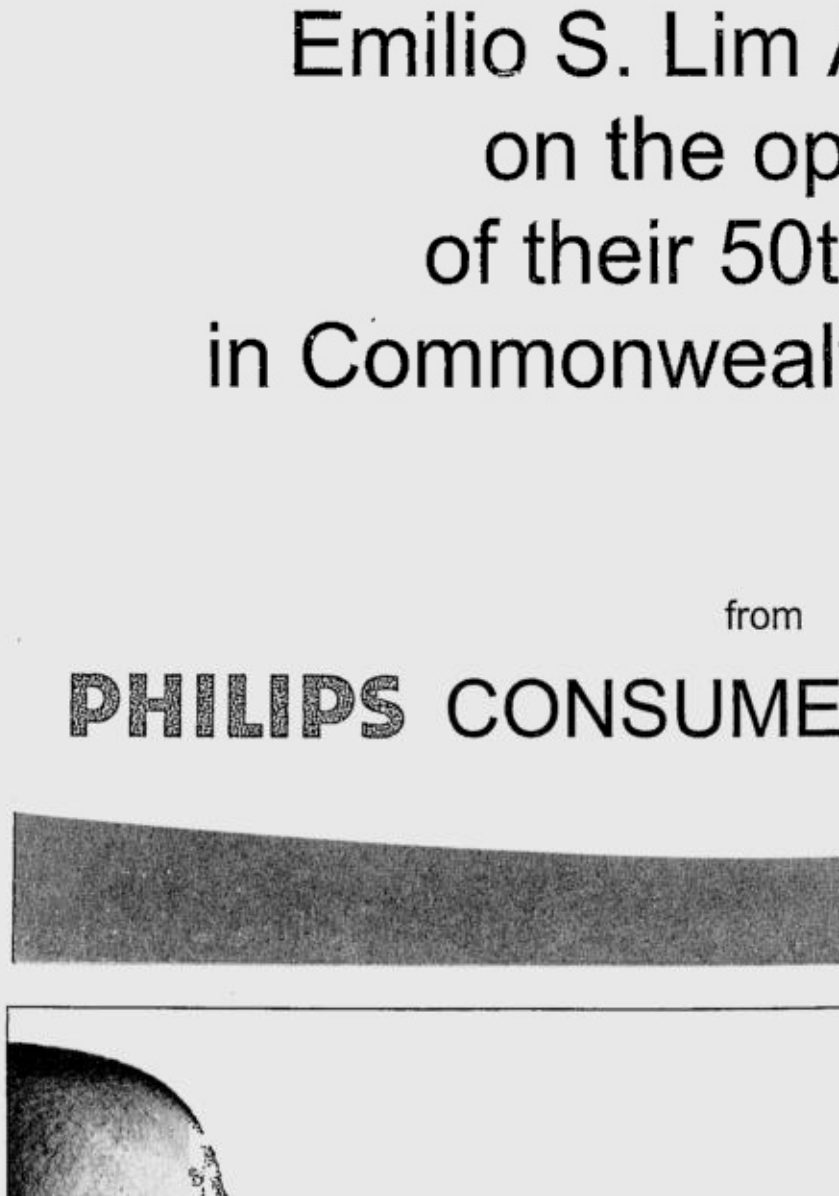

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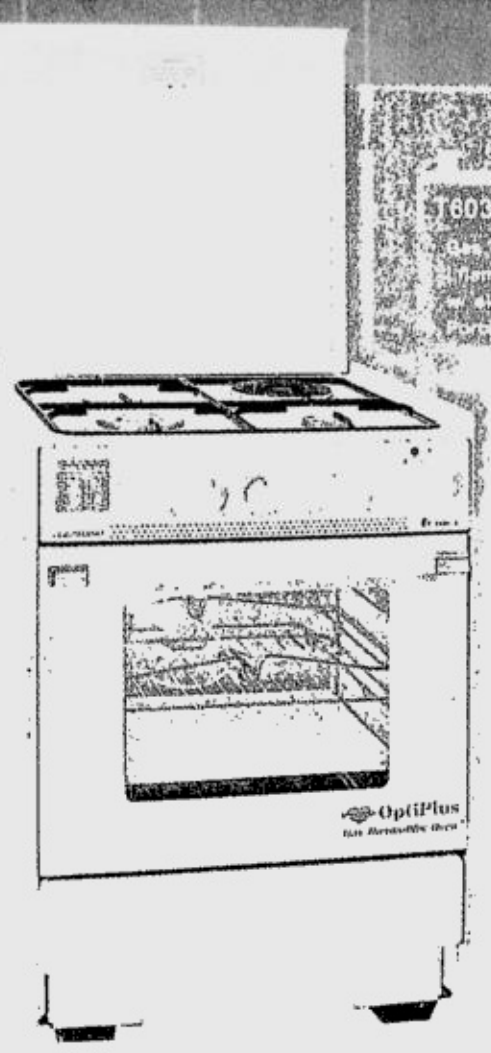

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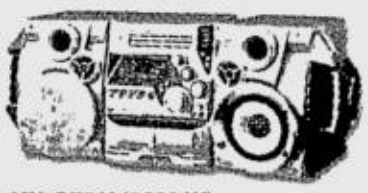

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VCD COMPONENT SYSTEM
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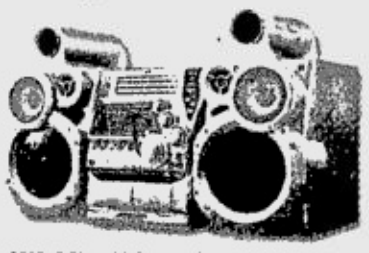

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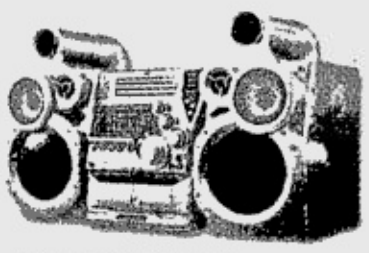

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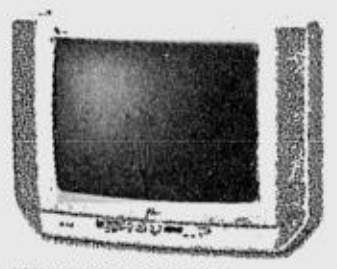

AV-20 N31 20" CTV
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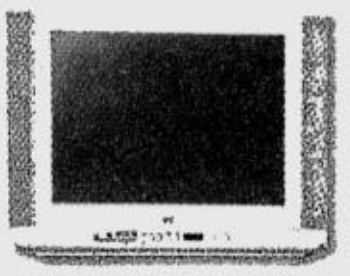

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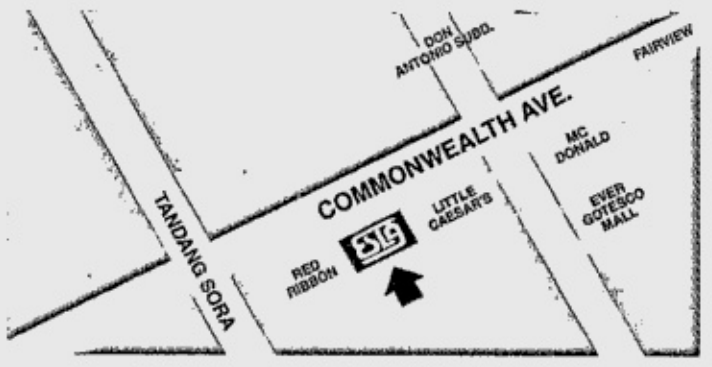

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49. TANAUAN, BATANGAS - Tel. #(043) 778-3220/778-3135/0916-385-8971
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E-MAIL ADDRESS: esla@4appliances.com

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THE BIRTH OF MANY ESLA'S

STORE	OPENED
ESLA- MAKATI	AUGUST '67
ESLA- CUBAO	AUGUST '70
(transferred to P. TUAZON - JANUARY 2002)	
ESLA-CALOOCAN	AUGUST '71
ESLA-MARIKINA	AUGUST '73
ESLA-PARAÑAQUE	AUGUST '75
ESLA- PASIG 1	AUGUST '77
ESLA-ALABANG	FEBRUARY '90
ESLA- MEYCAUYAN	AUGUST '94
ESLA- BAESA	OCTOBER '94
ESLA-IMUS	DECEMBER '94
ESLA- FAIRVIEW	FEBRUARY '95
ESLA- PROPER	JULY '95
ESLA- BIÑAN	OCTOBER '95
ESLA- SAN PEDRO	OCTOBER '95
ESLA-CAINTA MARCOS H-WAY	DECEMBER '95
ESLA - BALAGTAS	AUGUST '96
ESLA- MUÑOZ	SEPTEMBER '96
ESLA- PASIG 11 ROTONDA	OCTOBER '96
ESLA- STA. ROSA	NOVEMBER '96
ESLA- DASMA 1 PALAPALA	DECEMBER '96
ESLA- MALOLOS	JANUARY '97
ESLA- BALIWAG	FEBRUARY '97
ESLA- STA. MARIA	APRIL '97
ESLA- ANTIPOLO	JULY '97
ESLA- ESPAÑA	AUGUST '97
ESLA- CALAMBA	SEPTEMBER '97
ESLA- TANAY	OCTOBER '97
ESLA- GMA	NOVEMBER '97
ESLA- APALIT PAMPANGA	NOVEMBER '97
ESLA- DASMA 11	DECEMBER '97
ESLA- SAN FERNANDO	JULY '98
ESLA -LIPA	AUGUST '98
ESLA- SAN PABLO	FEBRUARY '99
ESLA- TANAUAN	MAY '99
ESLA- LAGRO	JUNE '99
ESLA- TAYTAY	AUGUST '99
ESLA- ANGELES CITY PROPER	APRIL 2000
ESLA- CAINTA ORTIGAS	APRIL 2000
ESLA- KALENTONG	MAY 2000
ESLA- BATANGAS CITY	JUNE 2000
ESLA- BINAKAYAN KAWIT CAVITE	OCTOBER '00
ESLA- ROSARIO CAVITE	JANUARY '01
ESLA- SUCAT PARAÑAQUE (NEW)	FEBRUARY '01
ESLA- FAIRVIEW II	MARCH '01
ESLA-SAN JOSE DEL MONTE BULACAN	APRIL '01
ESLA-MARIKINA II	MAY '01
ESLA- LUCENA CITY	JUNE '01
ESLA- LAS PIÑAS	JULY '01
ESLA- BALANGA BATAAN	JULY '01
ESLA- COMMONWEALTH	FEBRUARY '02

EMILIO S. LIM APPLIANCES

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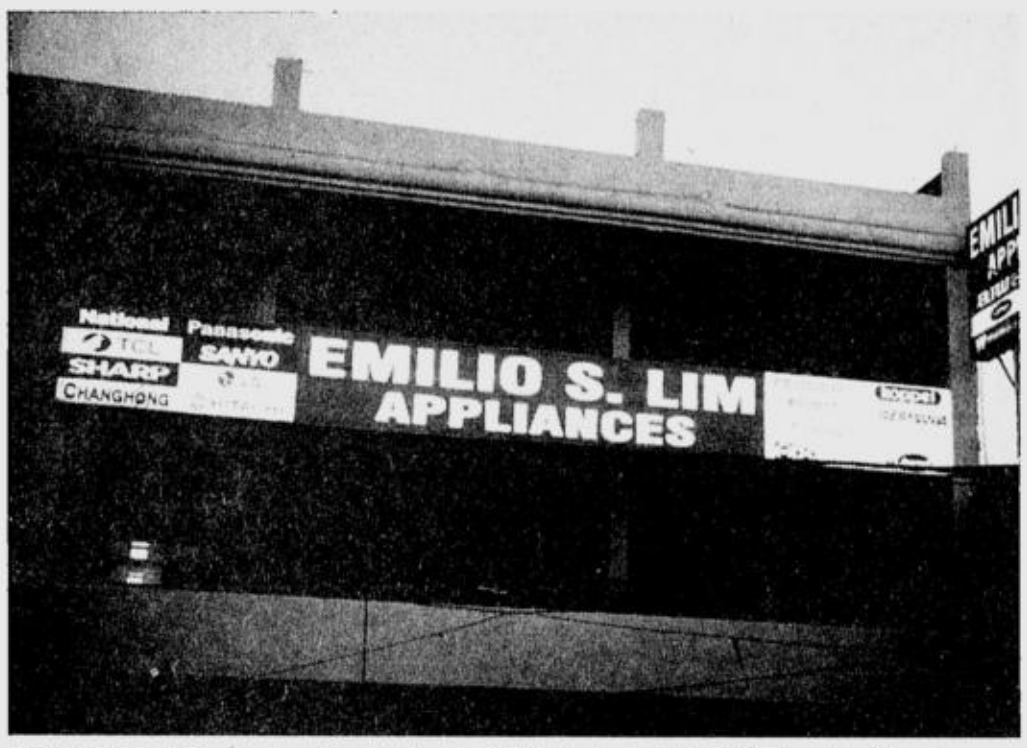
ALWAYS THE LOWER PRICE!

ESLA–P. Tuazon Branch (newly transferred) located at I-B Fersal Bldg., 245 P. Tuazon Cubao, Q.C. (beside Ali Mall)



ESLA–Caloocan, Sangandaan Branch (new building) located at #124-130 Gen. San Miguel, Sangandaan, Caloocan City.

WE STILL HAVE SPACE AVAILABLE!
FOR INQUIRIES PLS. CALL
671-5749/671-5758

The dash to 50 . . .

From page 11

and clean environments," echoes Albert.

Standardization started at the Sangandaan, Caloocan outlet. This would be complemented by the company's offering of new products such as those coming from China. Robert says that these are substantially cheaper by as much as 30 percent compared to Japanese and Korean brands.

"Hopefully, with this trust of reorganizing our stores, we can attract all class levels," says Robert.

Esla, he says, would continue to provide more services to its customers. The company is now offering the same-day delivery privilege and the application through Short Messaging Services, or text.

"We thought that the same-day delivery is something that would give us an advantage. When you buy an appliance, it will be delivered to you on the same day. Even at night, we will deliver it if the customer wants to," says Robert.

The application through text, on the other hand, is an innovation wherein customers can text or call their nearest Esla branch. Esla employees would visit them and give them the application forms.

"Our society now is more time-conscious, they don't have the luxury of time to visit our stores," Albert explains.

Aside from these innovations, promotions that have always been a hit to customers would continue.

The company gives out free flat irons to all installment buyers. The combo deal wherein the buyer can pay for the appliance he wants to buy for whatever amount he has and the balance would be financed via installment. There's also the last two installments free to good-paying customers. This is beside the premium items that are given to customers by the suppliers themselves.

Robert Lim attributes Esla's strength and staying power to its personalized service.

"We deal with customers one-on-one. We listen to them. We provide them their needs in the fastest way possible," says Albert.

Albert Lim echoes the same sentiment, saying that it is also something that they want Esla to be known for.

Robert says that if there's one thing that they want their customers to remember Esla by is *"maaasahan nila kami* (They can count on us)"

What do you **want** to **watch** today?

Presenting **the *New* 21PP2000,** the TV with
Multiple Picture-in-Picture Screen
from **POLYTRON**

From the makers of the only 21" color TV in the market with the Picture-in-Picture (PIP) feature comes the **21PP2000**. You still enjoy watching your favorite show and peek into other shows at the same time with the PIP mode. Or keep track of several shows all at the same time with the Picture-out-Picture (POP) mode. This visual smorgasbord of up to 7 shows is now possible with **21PP2000**, the TV with multiple Picture-in-Picture screens.

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HURRY! Drop by the nearest appliance dealer and ask for the 21PP2000 today.

Check out these other features of Polytron's 21PP2000 TV.

Virtual Flat TV • Built-in Subwoofer • Multisystem NTSC/PAL • Automatic Volume Leveling • Clock with Timer On/ Off • TV Output Connection • AV Stereo Call Program • Picture Improvement (Black & Blue Stretch) • Sleep Timer • Four Picture Modes (Bright/ Medium/ Soft/ Memory) • Auto Power Off at No Signal Four Sound Modes (Music/ Standard/ News/ Memory) • Blue Background • PNR (Picture Noise Reduction) • 2 External AV Input (Rear & Front)

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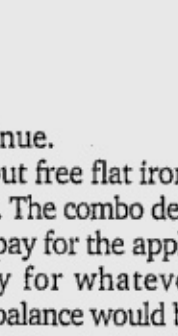

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EXPO 430 NVI6
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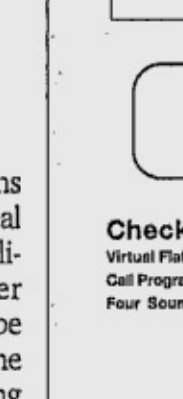

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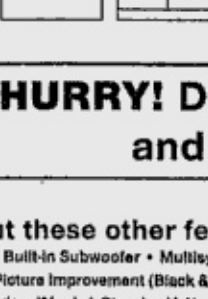
W/ GLASS DOOR
MADE IN SWEDEN

FKG-311	1-Glass Door	10.9 cu.ft.
FKG-371	1-Glass Door	12.9 cu.ft.
FKG-370	2-Glass Door	12.9 cu.ft.
FKG-570	2-Glass Door	12.9 cu.ft.



SCANFROST SLIDING GLASS TOP CHEST FREEZER

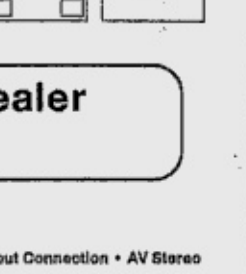
225-635	8.0 cu.ft.
335-635	11.8 cu. ft.
445-635	15.7 cu. ft.
535-635	18.9 cu. ft.
635-635	22.4 cu. ft.

SCANFROST SLANTED GLASS TOP CHEST FREEZER

306-935	10.6 cu.ft. (Angle Top)
406-935	14.3 cu.ft. (Angle Top)
506-935	18.0 cu.ft. (Angle Top)

FRAMEC ISLAND FREEZER
MADE IN ITALY
Calypso 150 TE w/o cover 13.2 cu. ft.
Calypso 200 TE w/o cover 18.2 cu. ft.

CSC S.R.L.
REFRIGERATED DISPLAY CASE
W/ GLASS DOOR - MADE IN ITALY
CV80 80 lt.
CV 140 140 lt.

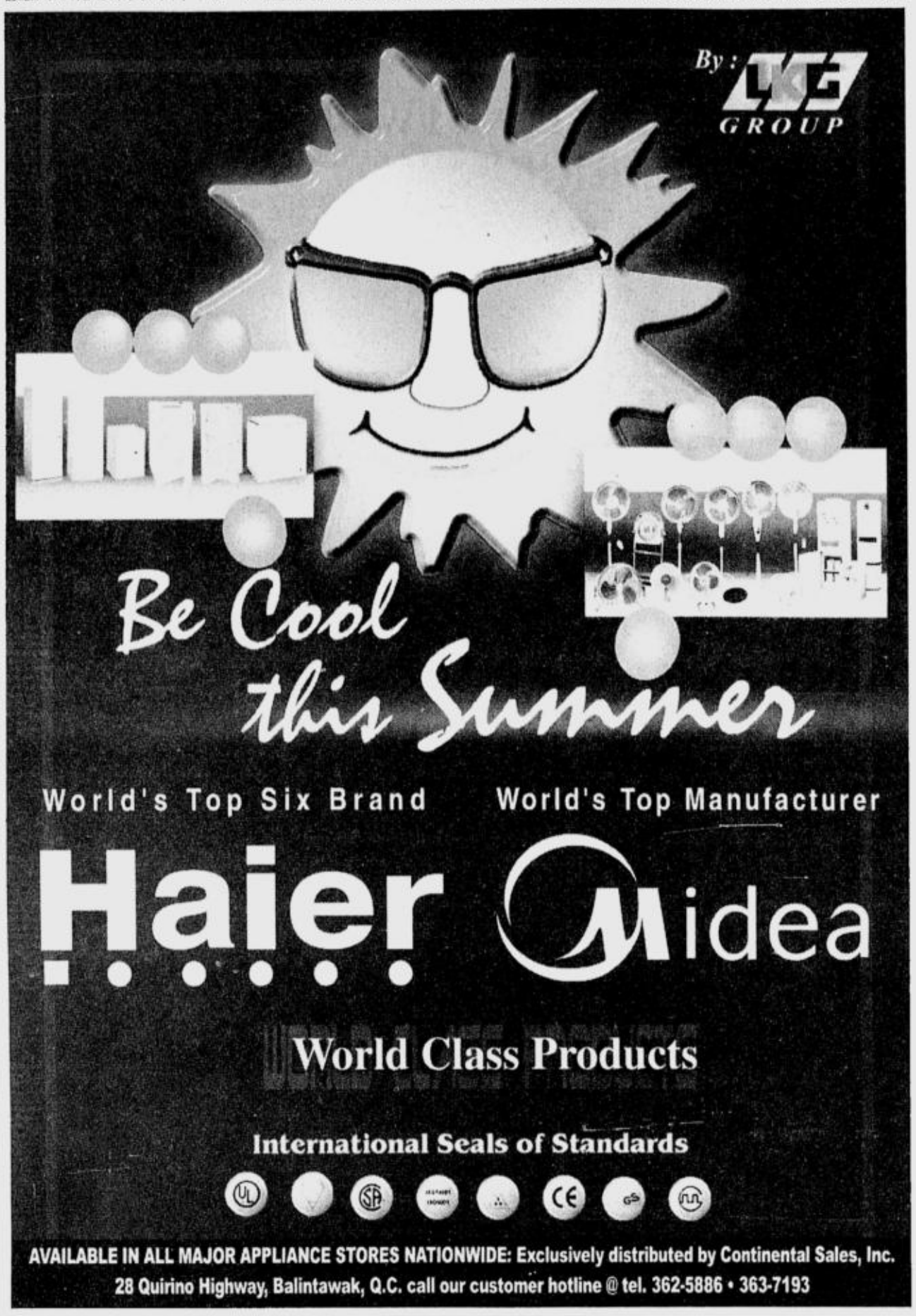


SCANFROST SOLID TOP DE LUXE CHEST FREEZER

AB-168	3.8 cu.ft.
HF-201	7.2 cu. ft.
211-307	7.5 cu. ft.
311-307	11.0 cu. ft.
411-307	14.5 cu. ft.
HF-521	17.9 cu. ft.
511-307	18.05 cu. ft.

3/F GRACE BLDG., ORTIGAS AVE., GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, M.M. TELS. 722-4277 • 722-4275 • 723-1479 • 721-5972 • 723-1480 • FAX: 721-3814

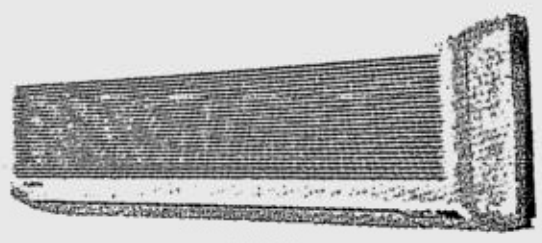
ESLA EMILIO S. LIM APPLIANCES



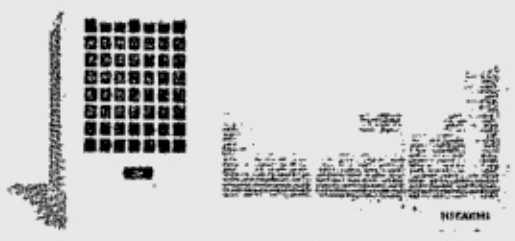
THE EVER-GROWING LIM FAMILY
Photo taken last Christmas with Emilio S. Lim and Emma Lim (seated, center) together with Emile Lim, daughter, surrounded by their grandchildren from (from left) John De Leon, Louisse De Leon, Amanda Lim, Vanessa de Leon, and Carol Aquino.

ESLA Farm Lots by the Lake located at Brgy. Palsara, Balete, Batangas.

The ESLA Urban Townhouses in Sto. Domingo, Cainta, Rizal (few units available. For inquiries pls call 671-5749/6715758)



Split-Type



Window-Type

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FEMAR bldg., M.L. Quezon
St. Antipolo, Rizal
630-5642, 697-1715

APALIT
Rejoel building
San Vicente, Apalit
Pampanga
(045)302-6614

BALAGTAS
#187 Mc. Arthur Hi-way
Poblacion, Balagtas, Bulacan
(044)693-7388, 693-4288

BALANGA, BATAAN
Rosar Commercial Complex
Inc., J.P. Rizal, Zutueta St. Brgy.
Poblacion, Balanga City, Bataan
(047) 237-1996, 791-2554

BALIUAG
#602 Cagayan Valley Rd.
Baliuag, Bulacan
(044) 6721693, 766-3741

BATANGAS CITY
P. Gurgon St. Batangas City
(043) 723-5228, 723-5392

BINALAKAYAN, CAVITE
Bautista Arcade Tirona Hi-way
cor. Major Samala St.
Binalakayan, Kawit, Cavite
(046) 411-1946, 434-6120

CALAMBA
Unit 5 & 6 Sta. Cecilia Bldg.
Center II. National Hi-way
Parian,Calamba, Laguna
(049) 545-7787, 545-5258

CALOOCAN
#124-128 General. San Miguel
Sangandaan, Caloocan City
287-3477,288-5497

CAINTA ORTIGAS
G & T Plaza Km. 20 Ortigas
Ave. Ext. Brgy. Sto. Domingo
Cainta Rizal
655-661, 655-6396

DASMARINAS I
#11 Aguinaldo Hi-way, Paliparan
Dasmarinas, Cavite
(046) 573-6456, 652-6519

DASMARINAS II
Congressional Ave, Sarai
Dasmarinas, Cavite
beside De la Salle University
(046) 860-2833, 416-5426

FAIRVIEW I
Along Commonwealth Ave
Fairview, Quezon City
427-6614, 427-6545

FAIRVIEW II
LF Bldg., Unit 21-H Blck 31
#13 Fview Ave., Cor. Commo
St. Fview Quezon City
427-6916

IMUS, CAVITE
#396 E. Aguinaldo Hi-way
Brgy. Palico, Imus Cavite
(046) 471-7166

KALENTONG
878-880 General Kalentong
Mandaluyong City
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LAGRO Q.C.
Unit 7 of Lester Building
Quirino Hi-way, Lagro Q.C.
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LAS PINAS CITY
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Las Pinas City
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LUCENA CITY
Sangalang Bldg., Juarez cor.
Merchant St., Lucena City
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811-3280, 729-6218, 729-6216
Fax# 729-6214

MALOLOS HI-WAY
#609 Paseo De Congreso
Meleos Bulacan
(044) 791-3325, 662-6230

MARCOS HI-WAY
Cor. Felix Ave., San Roque
Marcos Hi-way, Marikina City
645-1643, 645-6205

MARIKINA I
#31 Sumulong Hi-way, Sto. Nino
Marikina City
646-6510, 641-2845, 646-3786

MARIKINA II
#37 Sumulong Hi-Way
Sto. Nino, Marikina City
642-0885, 997-7331

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Market I Bldg., Mac Arthur Hi-way
Galvario Meycauyan, Bulacan
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NUNOZ
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K. Magsaysay, Munoz, Q.C.
927-4643, 451-4796, 924-8185

NOVALICHES BAESA
#247 AB&C Quirino Hi-way
Baesa Novaliches, Q.C.
454-0064, 330-6164, 453-8249

NOVALICHES PROPER
#1035 Quirino Hi-way
Sta. Monica, Novaliches proper
Quezon City
920-6609, 986-3474,

PARANAQUE QUIRINO
#0457 Quirino Ave., San Dionisio
Paranaque, Metro Manila
826-9152, 826-1507

PARANAQUE, SUCAT
#8219 Unit B Permanc
Building Dr. A. Santos Ave
San Isidro, Sukat, Paranaque
826-1352

PASIG I
Pasig Plaza Bulfacio
Victoria Theater Building
Dr. Sixto Ave., Pasig City
747-7488, 642-1676, 642-1683

PASIG II
#138 Caruncho Bldg.on Dr. Sixto
Antonio Ave., Pasig City
641-8804, 747-3788, 916-6168

ROSARIO, CAVITE
National Hi-way, Bo. Tejero
Rosario Cavite (Beside Emperor
Plaza Mall in front of EPZA)
(046) 438-0885, 438-0886

SAMPALOC, ESPANA
#1262 Espana St., Sampaloc
Manila
743-5924, 743-7014

SAN JOSE DEL MONTE
Delrey Bldg., #290Tungkong
Mangga, San Jose Del Monte
Bulacan
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SAN PABLO, LAGUNA
Zamora St., Cor. Regidor St.,
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SAN FERNANDO PAMPANGA
NAN Bldg., Mac Arthur Hi-way
Dolores, San Fernando, Pampanga
(045) 963 5872, 860-1786

SAN PEDRO
AOI ACM Gmen't, National Hi-way
Nueva, San Pedro, Laguna
8478652, 520-1626

STA. MARIA
Francisco Santiago St.
Poblacion, Sta. Maria Bulacan
(044) 641-2228, 641-3112

TANAY, RIZAL
Celapasan St., Plaza Aldex
Tanay, Rizal
699-0329, 693-6327

TANAUAN
#85 A. Malvar St., Tanauan
Batangas
(043) 778-3220, 778-2138

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Taytay, Rizal
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eslaeAppliances.com
SERVICE HOTLINE
729-6217, 729-6218,
729-6216

Pioneering realtor, too

INSPIRED by the success of his pioneering appliance store, Emilio S. Lim Jr., the man behind the success of Emilio S. Lim Appliances (Esla), diversified into the real estate business in 1975 through Esla Land Developers Inc.

The company then ventured into several land developments which includes a portion of Valle Verde I Subdivision in Pasig, the Green Valley Village in Baguio City, a socialized housing project in Cainta, Rizal, and the ESL Farm Lots By The Lake in Batangas.

The Valle Verde I Subdivision was the company's first project. This subdivision introduced the concept of a clubhouse within a subdivision, an idea followed by other developers.

The Valle Verde I project has 72 townhouses and 16 executive detached units. This was also the first time that the concept of a townhouse was introduced in the Philippines. The one-and-a-half story townhouse has a lot area of 170 sqm and a floor area of 240 sqm with ample open spaces—wide driveways and landscaped gardens in front of the units facing each other.

From Pasig, Esla moved north to the country's summer capital with the development of the Green Valley Village in Baguio City. This project also included a clubhouse.

The Green Valley Village was successfully marketed despite economic and political upheavals that swept the nation at the time.

In 1982, Esla's socialized housing project followed. Located at Barangay Sto. Niño, Cainta, Rizal, it was originally conceived as a housing program for Esla employees.

Another joint project of Esla is the marketing of ESL Farm Lots By The Lake located at Barangay Palsara, Balete, Batangas, (beside Taal Lake), with cottages for accommodation (overnight stay), pavilion, swimming pool, launching pad, storage and docking facilities for jet skis. Farm lot produce include coffee, black pepper, mahogany and fruit-bearing trees such as *rambutan*, mango, *langka*, *lanzones, suha,* and *kalamansi*.

Albert R. Lim, one of Emilio's sons who joined the company in October 1999, and also Esla's chief operating officer, has been assisting his father in implementing Esla's new projects.

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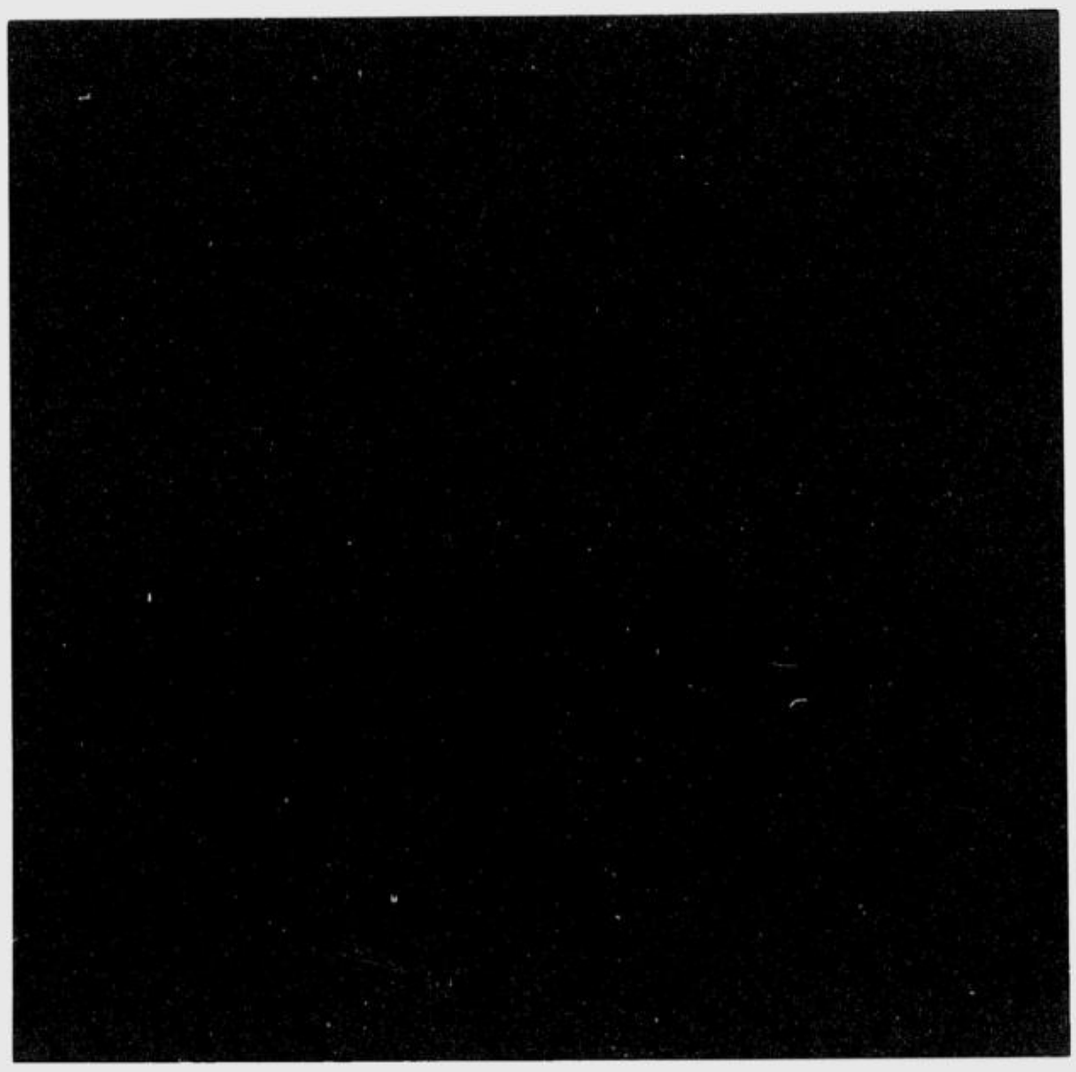

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MARCH

16 THRU 31

2002

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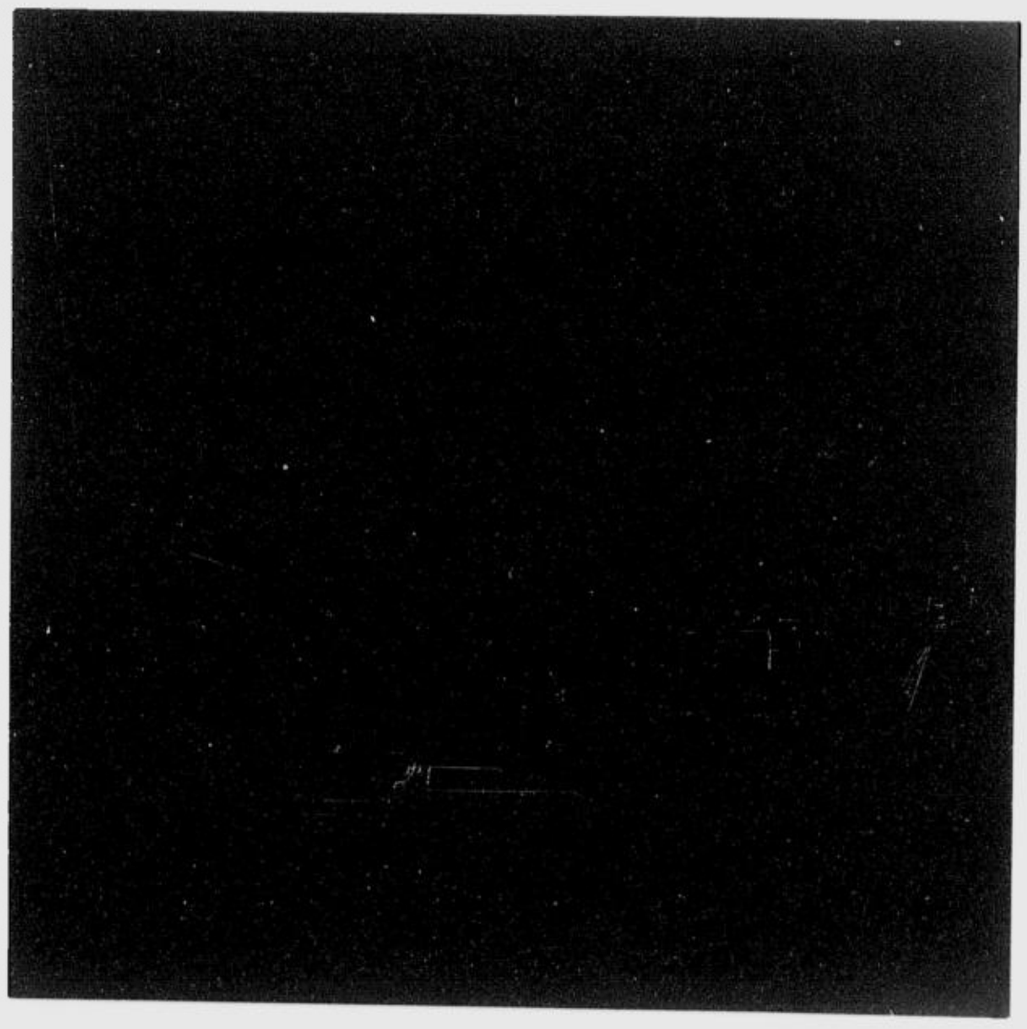

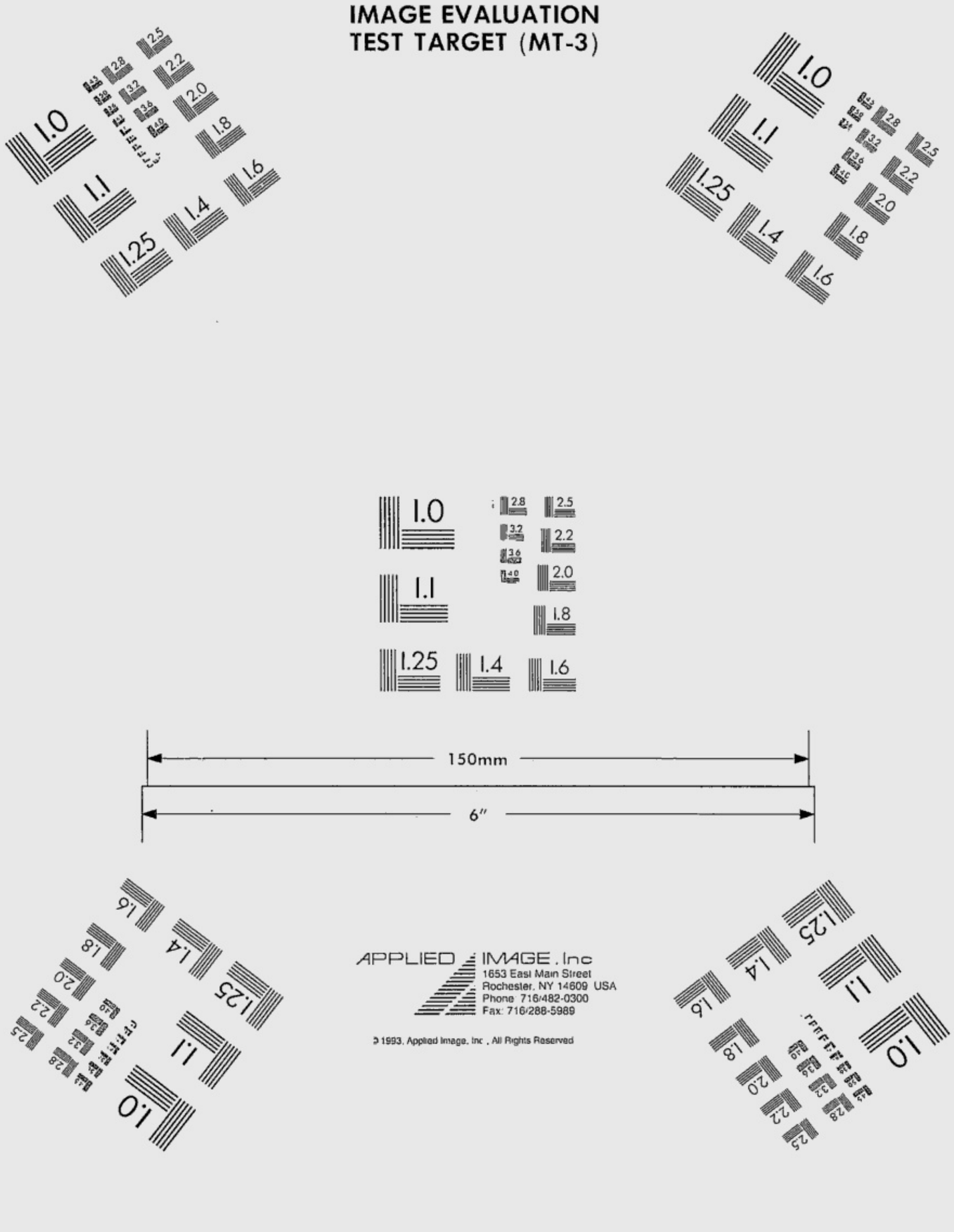
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NO ISSUES:
MARCH 29 & 30

8 suspected al-Qaida terrorists nabbed at Naia

STORY ON PAGE A2

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- **Gov't, MILF agree to resume peace talks** NEWS / A3
- **US boosts aid by $5B** WORLD / A11
- **Israel withdraws from Palestinian base** WORLD / A11

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IN *Saturday* SPECIAL

MINOGUE

- **Kylie Minogue tops music charts**
- **Oscar countdown begins**
- **The Hunks mark first year tomorrow**

'Dream team' starts arguing for defense

By Volt Contreras

JOSEPH Estrada's de officio lawyers, conceded by a state prosecutor as a "dream defense team," yesterday started to argue in court that he should be allowed to undergo knee surgery abroad despite being detained for a capital offense.

Estrada came to court for the first time since dismissing his original lawyers on Feb. 27, and expressed his intention to pursue his Nov. 10 motion to travel. His stance belied earlier statements by his camp that he was willing to become a cripple now that he had lost faith in the judicial system.

Mario Ongkiko, one of the nine court-appointed lawyers, said Estrada was "being singled out" for a travel ban.

"I've been appearing in a number of

DREAM/A18

HIS DAY in court finds ex-President Estrada in a foul mood even if allowed to address the court without the help of his lawyers. Moral supporters are his wife, Sen. Loi Ejercito, and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito. JOAN BONDOC

Cops keep pro, anti rallies apart

By Agnes Donato and TJ Burgonio

THE RALLIES staged yesterday while former President Joseph Estrada appeared before the Sandiganbayan did not turn out to be a confrontation between Edsa II and Edsa III forces.

While the pro-Estrada group left after a brief and peaceful rally on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City, the anti-Estrada forces were violently dispersed by plainclothesmen near the Sandiganbayan building.

Some 100 Estrada supporters gathered in front of the St. Peter's Church, which was approximately a kilometer away from the anti-graft court where the plunder case of their idol was being heard.

COPS/A18

Trust us, court tells Erap

Sandigan warns Estrada to mind his language

By Volt Contreras

THE EXPECTED "theatrics" did not occur, and Joseph Estrada showed up at the Sandiganbayan for a generally uneventful hearing marked at one point by the court's admonition to him to mind his mouth.

"Please be careful with your language, Mr. President," Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Minita Nazario told Estrada yesterday at the resumption of his trial. "On a pile of Bibles we assure you that this court was not created to convict you. You just have to trust us."

"There's no way for you to acquit me—or I'll be reinstated as President and the (Macapagal-Arroyo administration) will not allow it," Estrada told the court at one point.

But Justice Teresita de Castro quickly cut in to say that the court would rule according to the law "regardless of what happens to you or the incumbent (President)."

During the three-hour proceedings, the ousted President rose several times to address the bench and said he still wanted to seek medical treatment abroad, as well as be excused from going to court because of his arthritic knees.

But Nazario told him that, as a condition for him to be excused from attending his future hearings, he should stop issuing statements to the media undermining the court's integrity.

The Sandiganbayan special division chaired by Nazario reset by almost a month the hearings on Estrada's plunder case and three other criminal cases.

The move was in response to the motion filed by Estrada's de officio lawyers—two of whom were appointed only last Thursday—asking to be given more time to study the voluminous case records.

Estrada's new defense team is composed of private lawyers Rodolfo Jimenez, Manuel Pamaran, Mario Ongkiko, Prospero Crescini and Irene Jurado, and Arturo Temanil, Joefferson Toribio, Melita Lauron and Silvestre Mosing, all from the Public Attorneys Office.

Although he has rejected their services, the de officio lawyers appeared yesterday in compliance with a court order and met as a team only for the first time.

Asked by Nazario early in the hearing "how he feels" about his trial, Estrada recited his now familiar litany of complaints on the alleged bias of the judicial system, especially the Sandiganbayan special division.

Nazario told him to "be careful" with his words and not to make "gross and unfair accusations."

Estrada would later clarify that he was only against the "people running the system" and that he had confidence only in Nazario out of the three justices in the special division.

"I know you are still impartial—just you," he said.

Sandiganbayan sheriff Ed Urieta said Estrada willingly went with police escorts from his detention suite at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center.

"He was cooperative and was already dressed when the escorts arrived to fetch him," Urieta said.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, praised Estrada for his behavior, saying: "The former President was very cooperative. Just like what is expected of a former Presi-

TRUST/A18

EDWIN BACASMAS

MARKET day for President Macapagal who inaugurates the NGC Commonwealth Market Mall in Quezon City on Friday wearing slippers.

Manila is transit point for defecting N. Koreans

TWENTY-FIVE North Koreans seeking asylum at the Spanish Embassy in Beijing were on their way to Manila before being deported to a third country, a Philippine government official said yesterday.

The official, who requested not to be named, said the asylum seekers were scheduled to arrive at 7 last night and would be quarantined overnight. He did not know to which country the North Koreans were eventually headed.

But South Korea's YTN television news had earlier reported that the 25 were bound for Seoul.

The North Koreans—men, women and children said to be as young as 10—rushed past Chinese guards into the Spanish Embassy on Thursday and asked to be allowed to go to South Korea, saying they might be killed if sent home.

Two North Korean asylum-seekers approached the Spanish Embassy first, diverting the guards' attention while others streamed in through the open gate. The men then shook off the guards and rushed in themselves. Some thrust fists into the air in jubilation when they reached the embassy building.

Life Funds for North Korean Refugees, a Tokyo-based organization that assisted the group, described members as six families and three individuals. The organization also distributed statements by some members of the group. Some said they were carrying rat poison to kill themselves if they were sent home.

One man, who used a pseudonym, said hunger forced him and his wife to flee to China in 1996, but they were caught and sent home. He described being beaten and kicked in detention back in North Korea before the couple

MANILA/A7

If I'm lucky, I'll survive, says deportee

SANDAKAN, Malaysia—Ganda, a 40-year-old deportee set to board the night boat to Zamboanga, seems unruffled about what he might do next.

"Follow my fate. If I'm lucky, I'll survive," he says on the dock at Sandakan, a busy port in Malaysia's eastern Sabah state, where 400 other detainees gather under guard for their exit stamps.

A native of the country's easternmost state, Ganda says he has been lumped with thousands of people detained in a state-wide crackdown on illegal immigrants because he has no papers.

Nearly two weeks into a campaign

IF/A7

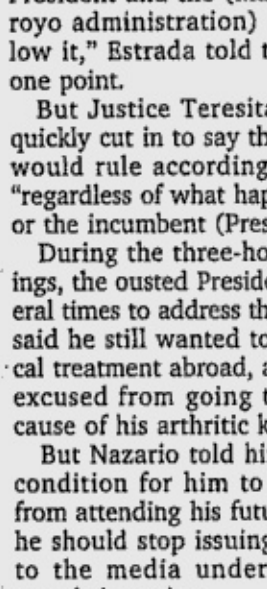
In slippers, Gloria does an Erap

IT WAS straight out of the Joseph Estrada school of politics: visit a public market, distribute land titles, sing a duet with a movie star. But yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo did the former actor one better: she showed up wearing slippers.

The President arrived at the Commonwealth Market Mall in Quezon City, a stone's throw away from the Sandiganbayan hall, about 20 minutes after Estrada reached the courthouse for his first hearing in two weeks. When she got off her Ford Expedition, she was already wearing slippers.

When Estrada showed up on

IN/A7



TOOTS SOBERANO

JESSIE ROSE BUCALEN: Excels in swimming and taekwondo.

Kalinga girl is PMA's top athlete

By Frank Cimatu and Jovelyn Reyes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—A Kalinga lass swam and kicked her way to become the most athletic member of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Banyuhay Class of 2002.

It is the first time in the PMA's history that a woman receives such an award.

Cadet First Class Jessie Rose Cabacsan Bucalen, 22, will receive the athletics saber during the PMA graduation on March 24 for obtaining the highest overall rating in sports participation, physical fitness and education.

Bucalen, who belongs to the Lubotan tribe in Kalinga, won the saber for taekwondo, swimming and athletics.

Maj. Gen. Rufo de Veyra, PMA superintendent, said Bucalen's achievement was another milestone in the short but glorious history of women cadets in the PMA.

Women were first admitted to the PMA in 1993 after the passage of Republic Act No. 7192, which allowed women to enter the service academies.

"This is the first time a woman cadet (received the athletics saber) and it's a great achievement," De Veyra said.

Bucalen won the gold medal in women's taekwondo in the recent Cordillera Administrative Region Tertiary Schools Athletics Association competition. She also represented the PMA in swimming and sprint.

"You can still excel in swimming even if

KALINGA/A19

Second FRONT PAGE

8 suspected terrorists nabbed

By Norman Bordadora and TJ Burgonio

AIRPORT authorities have arrested eight suspected terrorists, some of them believed linked to Osama bin Laden's al Qaida network, police said yesterday.

They included Indonesian, Bangladeshi, Middle Eastern and Japanese nationals and were detained separately in two groups of four.

The first group, involving three Indonesians and a Bangladeshi, was arrested at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Wednesday night as they were about to leave for Bangkok.

Found in the luggage of the suspected terrorists were such incriminating items as C4 explosives and other related sophisticated equipment used for bombing activities, the police said in a report shown to reporters.

The arrests on Wednesday were followed by the arrest yesterday upon their arrival at the international airport of four more suspected terrorists from the Middle East and Japan who were found to be carrying tampered British passports.

Charges have been filed against the three Indonesians—Agus Dwikarna, Abdul Jamal Balfas and Tamsil Lin Rung—for illegal possession of explosives, police said.

The name of the fourth member of the group, a Bangladeshi, has not been released.

The Pasay City court has recommended a bail of P200,000 each for the temporary release of the four who are currently in jail at police headquarters in Manila.

Police said they have been monitoring the group on suspicion they were connected with another suspected member of the Jemaah Islamiyah, the Indonesian Fathur Rohman Al Ghozi, who was arrested early this year for alleged involvement in the Dec. 30, 2000 bombings in Metro Manila.

Southeast Asian authorities have linked the Jemaah Islamiyah to the al-Qaida network of Bin Laden, the prime suspect in the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington.

Senior Supt. Jaime Caringal, head of the anti-terrorism Task Force Sanglahi, said the three Indonesians were members of the Jemaah Islamiyah. He said their calls had been traced to suspected members of the group.

An immigration intelligence agent told the INQUIRER that the suspected terrorists arrived in the country from Bangkok on March 11. He said intelligence agents had been tailing the group for about two days.

Airport security personnel pounced on the suspects during metal detector checks at the entrance to the airport.

In the second group of suspected terrorists arrested yesterday, a report to Immigration Commission Andrea Domingo said the four had been found with tampered British passports and a list of their contacts in the Philippines, Canada, India and Bangladesh. The four admitted knowing each other.

Domingo identified the four as Kamal Udin Ali, Vint Shah, Ahmed Jashim from the Middle East and Noboru Makishima of Japan.

In a report to Domingo, the British Embassy here said the passports' original holders' pictures had been substituted with those of the four suspects.

"There is a strong possibility that these foreigners could be under the command of a terrorist group operating internationally and assigned in this specific Southeast Asian region," the report said.

During interrogation of the first group of suspects, Dwikarna, a civil engineer, said he headed the Dewan Dakwah Islamiyah Indonesia (Indonesian Islamic Disaster Relief Committee), a nongovernment organization working with displaced Indonesians in the Sulawesi region.

Balfas said he managed the P.T. Bumi Daya Kutat, a contracting firm for the Indonesian-based mining firm, Bukit Baiduri Enterprises.

Police said the trip of the three Indonesians had been sponsored by Dr. Prasan Sironond, a Thai businessman who is said to be interested in coal mining exploration in Mindanao.

The three arrived in Manila on March 11 and were met at the airport by Sirinond and Robert Belgica, technical director for Macrobel Intl. Corp. with address at 8484 Poinsettia St., Marcelo Green Village in Parañaque.

They checked in at the Dusit Hotel in Makati.

They flew to General Santos City the next day and checked in at the East Asia Royal Hotel. They had dinner with five Filipinos, including two geologists, and discussed the possibility of mining coal in South Upi, Maguindanao province, among other topics.

On the morning of March 13, they flew back to Manila and drove to the airport for their evening flight to Bangkok. ***With reports from AFP and Reuters***

US soldier mans machine gun atop a truck while in constant touch with his comrades through the radio. DONDEE DONDOYANO

US may deploy more troops to RP

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The United States may deploy more troops to the Philippines to bolster a counter-terrorism exercise against extremist rebels holding two Americans hostage and to help rebuild the poor island province of the Muslim separatist group, an official said Friday.

Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, Filipino director for the military exercise, said a joint agreement limiting the number of US participants to the exercise to 660 could be revised to allow for more American deployments.

The US could also send home batches of soldiers earlier than planned to accommodate the new ones and avoid altering the agreement, Teodosio said.

Maj. Cynthia Teramae, US military spokesperson, refused to comment but said the American military has a measure of flexibility within agreed terms "to get things done."

The six-month exercise, which started Jan. 15, has been politically volatile because of concerns by left-wing groups and nationalist politicians over possible violations of constitutional limits on the presence of foreign troops.

"They broached to us that they may need to bring in additional training and engineering personnel," Teodosio said. "We're considering it favorably."

US military deployment in the Philippines has been the largest so far after Afghanistan, leading many to consider the country the second front in America's global war on terrorism.

US troops, however, are prohibited from engaging in combat. About 160 US Special Forces deployed in Basilan, where the Abu Sayyaf is believed to be holding Americans Martin and Gracia Burnham and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap captive, are allowed to bear arms but can only fire in self-defense.

Teodosio said an assessment by US officials showed they may need additional personnel to train Filipino troops and help rebuild Basilan, the home province of the rebels.

A 10-member construction assessment team comprised of US and Filipino military engineers has completed their four-day assessment aimed at determining the needs of the joint forces for "Balikatan 02-1."

Infrastructure projects to be undertaken include the building or rehabilitation of expeditionary roads and helicopter landing pads, the drilling of fresh water wells and the building of a water catchment and distribution system. ***AP, with a report from Rolly A. San Juan and Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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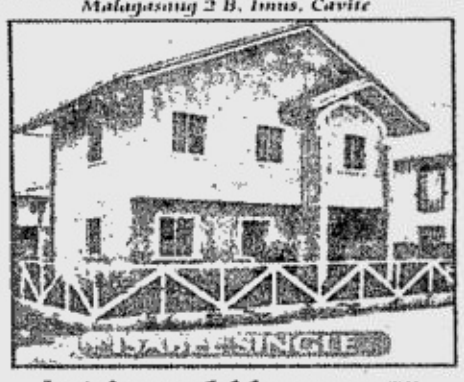

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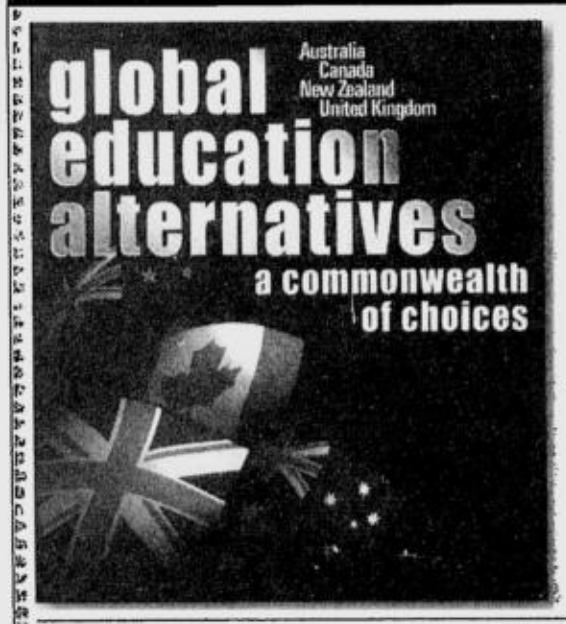

Event Schedule

Open Information:
Grand Ballroom
Hotel Inter-Continental, Makati City
15 March 2002 – 11:00AM – 9:00PM
16 March 2002 – 9:00AM – 4:00PM

Seminar Series:
Bel-Air & North Forbes Function Room
Hotel Inter-Continental, Makati City

15 March 2002
1400 – 1450 Understanding British Education
1500 – 1550 Study in Canada
1600 – 1650 The New World Class. Educated in New Zealand
1700 – 1750 Experiencing Australian Education
1800 – 1850 Canadian Alumni Association
1900 – 1950 Student's Life: UK

16 March 2002
0930 – 1120 Australian Institutions
1130 – 1350 Canadian Institutions
1400 – 1455 UK Institutions
1500 – 1655 New Zealand Institutions

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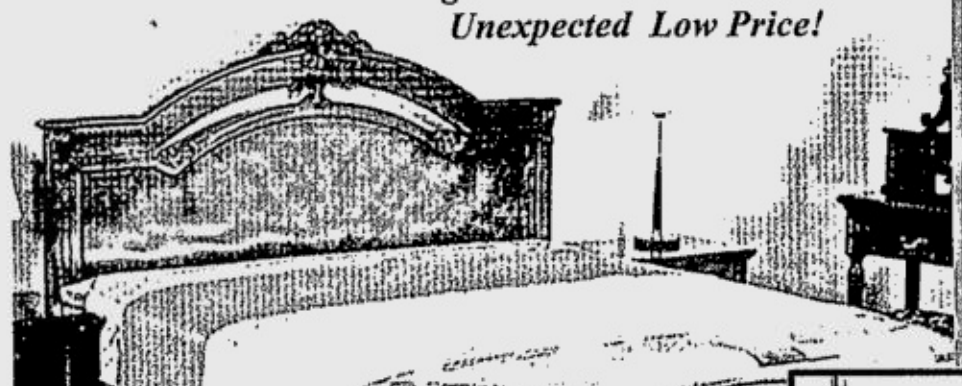

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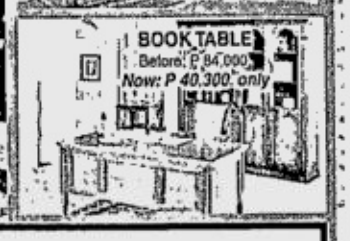

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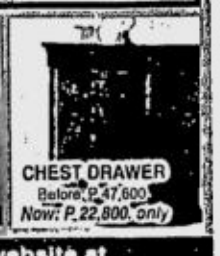

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AFP chief raps Marine general: Stop talking

By Martin P. Marfil

DIAZ

ARMED Forces Chief Diomedio Villanueva yesterday rebuked the deputy chief of the Southern Command, Brig. Gen. Rodolfo Diaz, for revealing "tactical information" concerning the purported escape of Abu Sayyaf from Basilan island.

Villanueva said that Diaz, the former chief of deposed ex-president Joseph Estrada's Presidential Security Group, should stop talking about it as it could endanger Filipino troops hunting the bandit group.

Diaz was quoted the other day as saying that Abu Sayyaf leaders have fled Basilan and taken refuge in Zamboanga City and other places.

Two Abu Sayyaf leaders, each with a P1-million prize on their heads, were arrested in Zamboanga City on Tuesday.

One of the arrested men was Munib Assa who is wanted for the kidnapping of dozens of schoolchildren and their teachers from Sumisip town in March 2000 and for the beheading of two male teachers.

"I don't think that this is the right forum for us to be discussing this," Diaz said when asked to comment on reports of what Diaz had reportedly said.

Villanueva said he was not sure if Diaz had indeed said what was reported.

Still, he said that kind of information "should not be discussed in the press or in media and I think we should stop talking about tactical information because it will place our troops in danger and it will be telegraphing our moves . . . about how things are being done."

Military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said the report about the escape of Abu Sayyaf members from Basilan had not yet been confirmed.

"This should be confirmed by independent sources," he said.

Adan maintained, however, that the main body of the Abu Sayyaf has remained in Basilan, holding on to the American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham.

He said this was based on data provided by the US Balikatan forces using their advanced equipment.

"The presence of American equipment is greatly helping our search . . . Their hiding place continues to shrink. With the modern equipment, our search became very systematic," Adan said.

He said the military did receive information about Abu Sayyaf bandits being deployed in different parts of Mindanao but said this was still being verified.

Gov't, MILF agree to resume formal peace talks

By C. Pablo

THE GOVERNMENT and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front have agreed to resume formal peace talks, possibly in Kuala Lumpur, Secretary Eduardo Ermita, presidential adviser on the peace process, said yesterday.

Ermita said the agreement was reached after the two sides met in Cotabato City on March 13 and agreed to drop accusations that each had violated the ceasefire accord.

"The peace talks would resume," Ermita announced over radio dzRH, although both sides had yet to decide on a date.

Government chief negotiator Jesus Dureza met with his MILF counterpart, lawyer Lanang Ali, while Col. Romeo Caliso and MILF commander Tapsa Julhani met as members of the Coordinating Committee for the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH).

The two sides signed an agreement proclaiming "their commitment to pursue a peaceful solution to the Mindanao conflict," Ermita said.

Ermita said the CCCH will hold a capability-building workshop on March 18-21 to strengthen the ceasefire by establishing monitoring teams.

But, Ermita said, before the formal talks could resume, representatives of both sides will sit down to discuss concerns like rehabilitation, area development and ancestral domain.

"If an agreement is reached on these concerns, we will then ask Malaysia for permission to resume the talks there," Ermita said.

The formal talks were suspended by the government last month following alleged violations of the ceasefire by the MILF.

During the March 13 meeting, both sides assured that the fire fights "did not involve MILF elements," Ermita said.

Ermita said that while there had been fighting in Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, these were caused by "personal feuds and political rivalry."

He said the MILF also denied earlier reports attributed to the Armed Forces of the Philippines that the MILF leadership had ordered fresh attacks against government forces.

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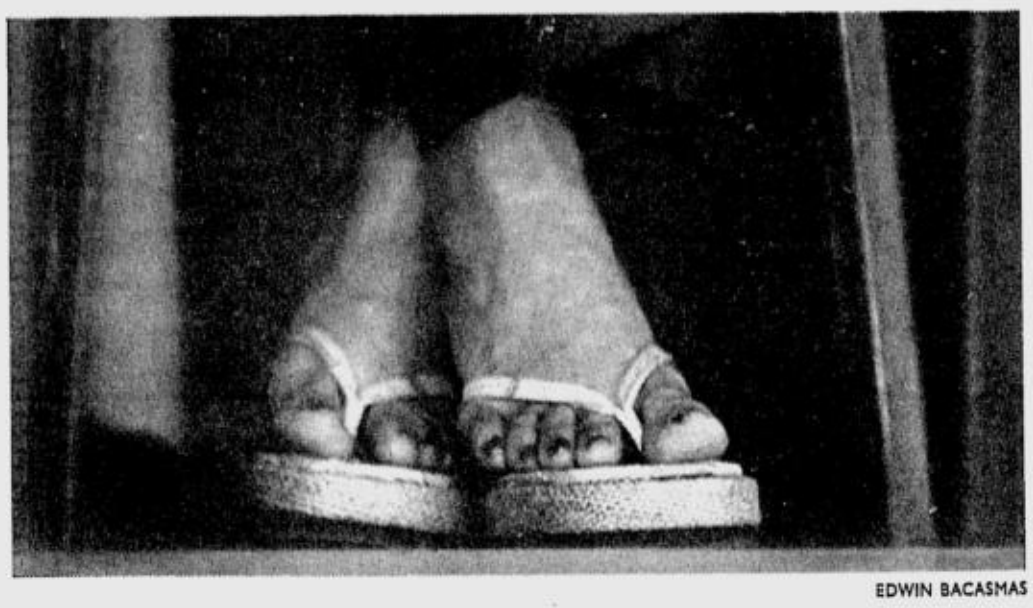
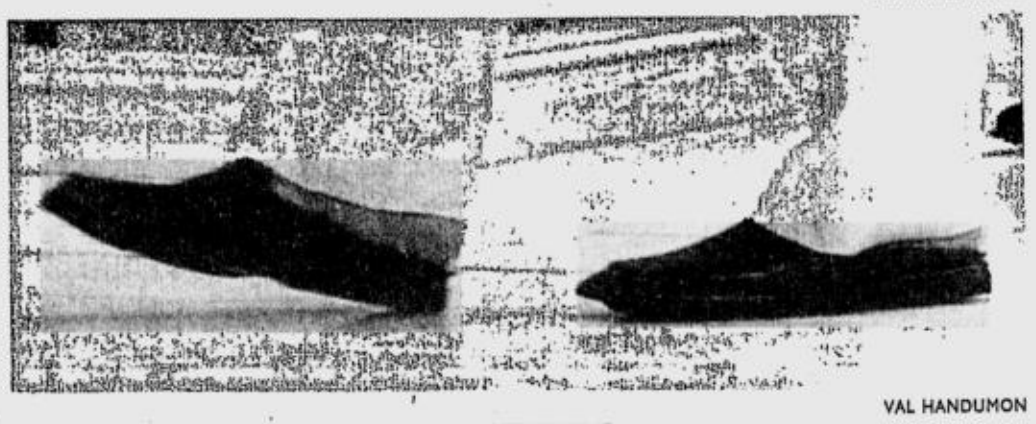


EDWIN BACASMAS



VAL HANDUMON

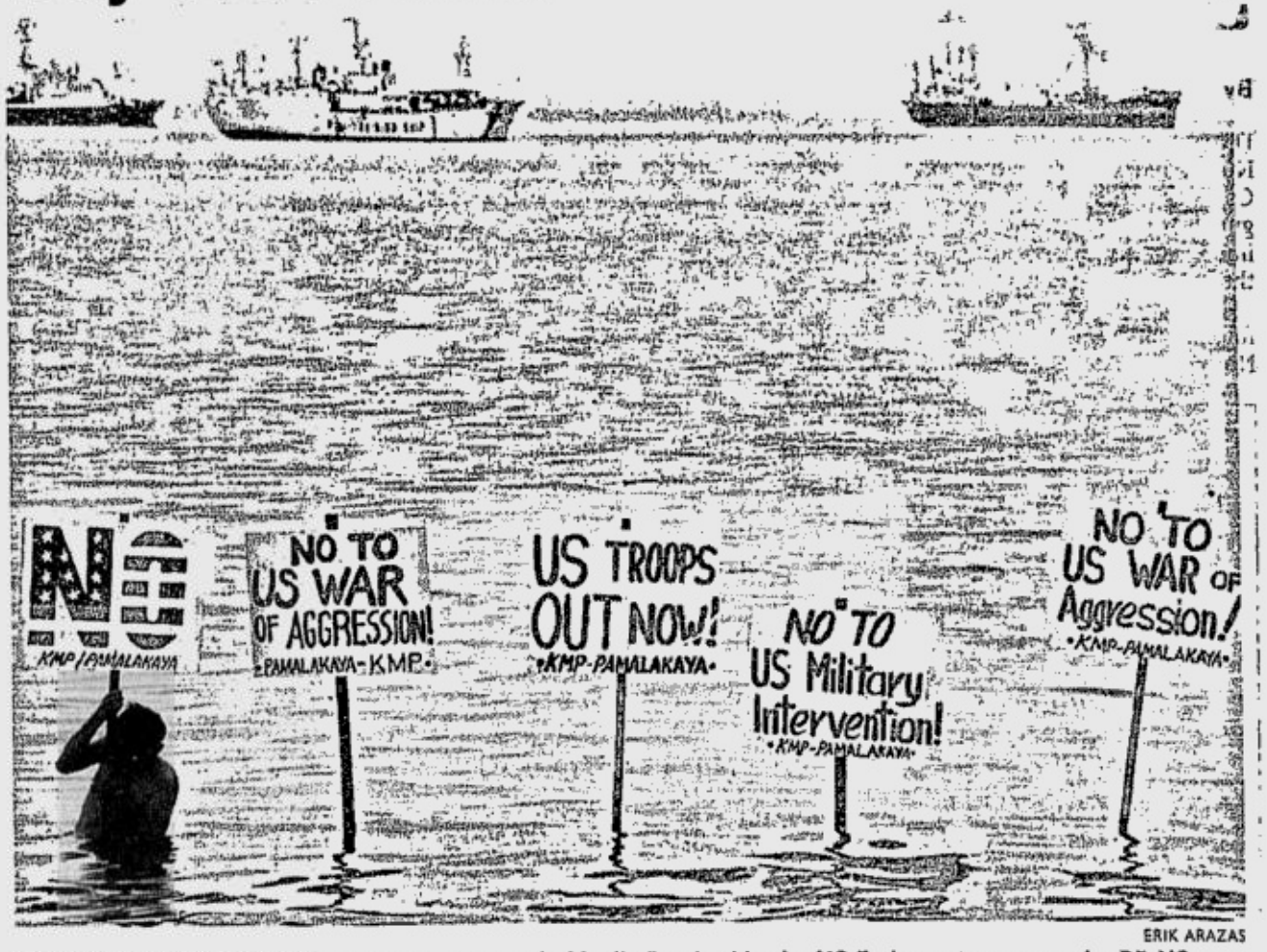
JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

SLIPPERS politics, his and hers. Japanese-style slip-ons (top) belong to President Macapagal to prop up her pro-*masa* image for the inauguration of the Commonwealth market mall in Quezon City on Friday. (Above) To protest his appearance in court last October, President Estrada wore fashionable brown leather slides.

(At right) Anti-Estrada groups rally in front of the Sandiganbayan.

(At left) Pro-Estrada PMAP member wears a wristband like his idol.

Day of Protests



ERIK ARAZAS

A PAMALAKAYA member plants a rally poster in Manila Bay beside the US Embassy to protest the RP-US war exercises in Mindanao.

JOAN BONDOC

SC gives go-ahead for Misuari trial

By Michael Lim Ubac

IT'S ALL systems go for the trial of Nur Misuari after the Supreme Court yesterday ordered the Laguna regional trial court to begin immediately proceedings against the Moro rebel leader.

In a one-page resolution, the full court directed Executive Judge Norberto Geraldez of the Calamba, Laguna RTC to "conduct the trial and hearing" in an especially built courtroom in Fort Sto. Domingo, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

The SC issued the order after it was informed by the Philippine National Police that the courtroom was ready for the trial of Misuari, who is facing rebellion charges for allegedly ordering attacks on government forces in Sulu, last November.

The courtroom was built next to the bungalow that had been constructed as a detention facility for former President Joseph Estrada and his son Jinggoy.

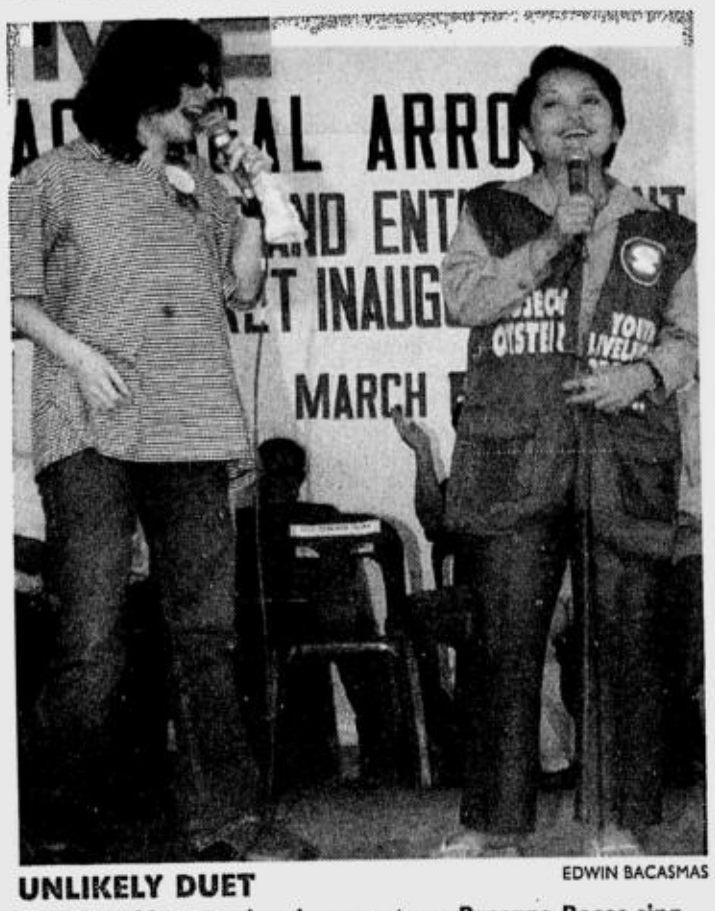
Misuari is occupying the bungalow since the Estradas have been detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City since shortly after their arrest on plunder and other charges last year.

In ordering the trial, the SC quashed all legal obstacles put up by Misuari's lawyers—Arthur Lim, Macapanton Abbas Jr. and Salvador Panelo.

Misuari and his spiritual adviser, Ustaj Abu Haris Osman, have been detained at the PNP's Special Action Forces training camp at Fort Sto. Domingo since being brought back from Malaysia in January.

ERRATUM

The featured item: L&L Fuji Apple #36/ #30/ 32, in SM Supermarket's TLC Fresh for March 15 to April 4 should have been: Fuji Apple #36/ #30/ 32. Our apologies.



EDWIN BACASMAS

UNLIKELY DUET
President Macapagal and sexy actress Rosanna Roces sing "Sometimes When We Touch" during the opening of the Commonwealth market mall in Quezon City.

Over 1,500 poll employees cast their vote for Benipayo

By Blanche S. Rivera

OVER 1,500 employees of the Commission on Elections voted with their pens yesterday, signing a manifesto of support for embattled Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo and two other commissioners. Ten of the poll body's 14 regional directors added their signatures, even as a statement from Benipayo's office claimed there were "more people signing."

The manifesto, which was signed by 1,510 of the Comelec's 5,281 employees and will then be submitted to the Commission on Appointments, was the first clear sign of a split in the agency's ranks. Officials of Region IX, where Commissioner Luz Tancangco hails from, did not sign the manifesto. Those from Region I, the Caraga and the National Capital Region also declined or had not yet done so as of press time.

But directors and employees, including field officers, from other regions declared their "unequivocal support" for Benipayo's group of Macapagal-appointed commissioners, which include Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr.

"We believe that the means by which they propose to pursue the modernization of the Commission are realistic, doable and beneficial both to government and the Commission, guided by the overriding objective of judiciously expending public funds," the document read.

The employees said they were convinced "beyond all doubt" that Benipayo, Borra and Tuason were acting only for the good of the country with the policies they are pursuing.

The three, who have been bypassed several times by the CA, are blocking the implementation of the contract with a consortium for the Voters Registration and Identification System (VRIS).

Tancangco, and commissioners Ralph Lantion, Rufino Javier and Mehol Sadain are pushing for the P6.5-billion VRIS contract, which they claim will clean the voters' list.

The signatories said their decision to support Benipayo's group was made "independently and openly."

Two-hour meeting

Only last Monday, a group of leaders representing the two houses of Congress and 10 political parties met with the bickering election commissioners to try to resolve the dispute.

But after the two-hour meeting, Tancangco made clear to the INQUIRER in a phone interview that her group's opposition to Benipayo, Borra and Tuason was "non-negotiable," and should not be made a precondition for reconciliation.

"It took us one year to do that (file the petition with the CA opposing the three commissioners' appointment). We cannot just commit to withdrawing it," she said, adding they "did not see a change of heart in the chairman" during his first year in office.

Tancangco even refused to shake Benipayo's hand at the end of the meeting.

Undaunted, Speaker Jose De Venecia announced a "major breakthrough."

"The commissioners agreed to develop a working relationship to end the paralysis because of the feud between two factions," De Venecia said in a statement then.

After leaders of Congress failed to reconcile the warring factions, President Macapagal-Arroyo had said she would talk to the four opposing commissioners herself.

US troops to give toys to win battle for the hearts

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Some 2,259 kilograms of sports equipment and relief goods will arrive today from Okinawa, Japan, as part of Balikatan 02-1's non-military outreach program scheduled to begin next week.

Dubbed "The Clothing Connection and Toys for Tots," distribution of the goods will involve the US troops taking part in the joint military exercises with the Philippine military.

The goods are expected to arrive at the Edwin Andrews Air Base at 11 a.m.

Maj. Cynthia Teramae, US military spokesperson, said the donation was part of a three-year-old program established by the 353rd Special Operations Group maintenance squadron based in Okinawa, Japan.

She said the 353rd is currently deployed in Mactan, Cebu, to provide air support, cargo and personnel transport, medical evacuation and aerial reconnaissance to the Balikatan exercise.

Teramae said that over the years, the squadron has gathered clothing and, in many cases, new toys to be donated to the people wherever they are deployed.

She said the unit last year donated toys and clothing in six different places. Their most recent donation included over 1,000 toys provided by the US Marine Corps.

On another front in the military exercises, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman disclaimed reports prostitution was on the rise in this city with the presence of the American soldiers.

"Give us evidence of these women first and we will try to give them alternative jobs," Soliman said yesterday in Davao City.

She said the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the Zamboanga City government have been monitoring the Balikatan exercises and have found no proof of an increase in prostitution cases.

"I saw with my own eyes that by 11 p.m., Zamboanga is already asleep," Soliman said, adding, "we have not seen any increase (in prostitution)."

Soliman said she counted fewer than 10 bars in this city when she was here and the bars had been in existence before the Balikatan exercises.

The bars, she added, closed before midnight.

"The only way for prostitutes (to get together with the troops) is to be brought into the camps," Soliman said. ***Rolly A. San Juan and Joel B. Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

US envoy's help sought on travel ban

SENATE President Franklin Drilon has sought the help of United States ambassador Francis Joseph Ricciardone in convincing the US state department to lift the adverse travel advisory on the Philippines.

Drilon made the pitch for the country's tourism industry during a courtesy call by Ricciardone on him Monday.

"Our country has been subjected to adverse publicity as a result of the ongoing terrorism in the South. Our tourism industry, in particular, has suffered from the travel advisory issued by the US state department," Drilon said in a statement.

Drilon told Ricciardone that "there is no basis for a travel advisory in so far as the major parts of the country is concerned."

Tan Yu body arriving Sunday

THE REMAINS of Tan Yu, the billionaire Chinese-Filipino tycoon who died in Houston, Texas, on March 12, will be flown to Manila on Sunday morning.

A special necrological Mass will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Sunday at his residence on 16 Guirayan corner Palansa streets, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City.

The billionaire businessman, who died at 75 of heart failure, will be laid to rest on March 22, at 10 a.m. at the family mausoleum of the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City.

Rev. Franklin Lee presided over a Christian memorial service in Houston before Tan Yu's remains left the city on March 15. Daughters Elizabeth "Pin-Pin" Kalaw, Betty Tan Van and eldest son Dr. Elton See Tan will be accompanying the body.

Woman reb killed in Antipolo clash

By Martin P. Marfil

A SUSPECTED member of the New People's Army—a woman—was killed while three others were wounded and captured in a clash with Army soldiers yesterday on the outskirts of Metro Manila.

The encounter, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta said, occurred in Antipolo City and resulted in the confiscation of six firearms from the rebels.

Mabanta said only one soldier, identified as a Corporal Dila, was wounded in the encounter.

He did not identify the NPA fatality or those who were wounded and captured.

"The encounter took place just three kilometers from an abandoned rebel training camp that the government forces discovered three days ago. The camp could house about 50 people," Mabanta said.

Mabanta said the Army's 1st Infantry Battalion launched an operation after discovery of the camp in San Jose, Antipolo City, on Tuesday.

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Tuadles killer now eligible for parole

By Michael Lim Ubac

A FORMER gaming official who was convicted for the murder of basketball star Arnulfo "Arnie" Tuadles in 1996 could now be eligible for parole, a justice department official said.

The official, who asked not to be named, said The Board of Pardons and Parole was studying the possibility of commuting the sentence of Alberto "Ambet" Antonio.

Antonio, a former official of the Games and Amusement Board and a close friend of jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada, has already served more than six years in jail, including credit earned for good conduct.

The justice official said Antonio had served his sentence "with excellent conduct."

Under the rules of the Board of Pardons and Parole, Antonio now qualifies to have his sentence commuted, having served one-third of the minimum period of his sentence.

Antonio was sentenced to *reclusion perpetua*, or 30 years in prison.

He was also ordered to pay an indemnity of P50,000 to Tuadles' heirs, P226,298 as actual damages, P7,200 as compensatory damages for loss of earnings, P3 million as moral damages and P50,000 as exemplary damages.

It took the Pasig Judge Martin Villarama Jr. only 86 days to decide the case.

However, Antonio appealed his judgment of conviction before the high court.

After three years, on July 14, 2000, the Supreme Court 1st Division modified the judgment from murder to homicide. It also reduced Antonio's sentence from *reclusion perpetua* to a maximum of 14 years.

Antonio killed Tuadles during a card game in a San Juan restaurant frequented by Estrada.

ANTONIO

TUADLES

The 40-year-old Tuadles was shot pointblank with a laser-equipped Beretta 92F automatic pistol during a quarrel over a high-stakes game of *pusoy dos* (a variation of the Hong Kong card game called Big2) at the International Business Club on Wilson Street, Greenhills, on Nov. 2, 1996.

The place was also known as Club 419, said to have been taken from the birth date of Estrada, April 19.

After the shooting, Antonio surrendered to Estrada's son, the then San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada. Then he went to see the elder Estrada, the then vice president, in Tagaytay City before finally giving himself up to police.

Antonio was a longtime resident of San Juan where Estrada was a mayor in the 1960s.

In reducing his sentence, the SC cited the absence of treachery. It said the killing of Tuadles could not qualify as murder since there was no aggravating circumstance.

The ruling was penned by Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago.

"All the evidence shows that the incident was an impulse killing. It was a spur-of-the-moment crime," the ruling said.

The high tribunal also affirmed the conviction of Antonio's co-accused, policeman Juanito N. Nieto, who was present at the card game but failed to arrest Antonio and did not even call for an ambulance after the shooting.

Nieto was also found to have intimidated IBC security guard Jose Bobis who had witnessed the shooting and whom the policeman tried to convince not to testify.

The high court, however, acquitted a third accused, policeman Honorio Cartalla Jr., who had been charged and convicted as an accessory for failing to produce during the trial the laser mechanism of the gun that was used in the killing.

Antonio and Tuadles were said to have quarreled over how Tuadles would pay his losses after the card game. Antonio said Tuadles had lost P46,200.

Antonio claimed that at the height of their argument, Tuadles grabbed the Beretta which was lying on top of a service table. He said the gun went off when the two grappled for possession of it.

The basketball player was hit between the eyes.

Villarama, in the lower court ruling, had sentenced Antonio to life imprisonment instead of death for the same reason that the high court cited in downgrading the charge and the penalty—the absence of aggravating circumstances.

But Villarama said treachery was present "as there was a sudden attack."

"That the attack was preceded by a scuffle, as pointed out by the accused, is of no moment, since treachery may still be appreciated even when the victim was forewarned of danger to his person," Villarama said.

815 Filipinas rescued from mail-order-bride syndicates last year

By Cynthia D. Balana

A total of 815 Filipino women were rescued last year from the clutches of mail-order bride syndicates and failed interracial marriages.

This was according to Sen. Loren Legarda as she pushed for her proposed amendments to Republic Act 6955, or the Mail Order Bride Act of 1990, when Congress resumes session after the Lenten break.

Legarda said the Department of Social Welfare and Development brought home and took care of the women-victims of trafficking last year.

She said the alarming DSWD report should move government to amend the Mail-Order Bride Act to enable it to counter the use of the Internet by mail-order-bride syndicates.

"That the DSWD and other government agencies had to bring back home and take care of these unfortunate Filipinas show us the gravity of the problem," Legarda said.

"Our government should not be this helpless in going after these syndicates."

The proposed amendments were contained in Senate Bill 1971, which penalizes the trafficking of Filipino women through matchmaking and outright prostitution through the use of Internet websites.

Legarda said that DSWD Secretary Corazon Juliano-Soliman had admitted that the government was helpless in going after Internet-based syndicates because there is no law that penalizes their activities.

She said that the victims of trafficking were mostly between 16 to 24 years old from large and poor families.

She said the victims had to undergo medical and psychological services, self-enhancement skills development, counseling and livelihood assistance.

Last month, the Bureau of Immigration banned the operators of US-based mail-order bride websites victimizing Filipino women.

They were Larry Pendarvis and Delaney Davis.

Their websites—www.filipina.com and www.filipinalady.com—offered access to catalogs of hundreds of prospective Filipino brides, including some as young as 14, for a fee ranging from $2 to $60.

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Board of Foreign Service Examinations (BFSE) of the Department of Foreign Affairs announces the holding of the –

2002 FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER (FSO) EXAMINATIONS

to recruit candidates for appointment to the position of Foreign Service Officer Class IV (FSO IV).

The FSO examinations consist of three (3) parts which will be held on the following dates:

Qualifying Test	: 5 May 2002
Written Examinations	: 3, 4 and 5 July 2002
Oral Examinations	: To be determined at a later date.

IMPORTANT:

(1) Application forms and relevant information regarding the examinations may be obtained personally or requested through mail from the following offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

The Board Secretariat
12/Fl., DFA Building
2330 Roxas Blvd.
Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 834-3083/
3080/
4925/
4923

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Causing-Lozada Bldg.
Osmena Blvd., corner
Lapu-lapu St.
Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032)
256-3193
253-6798
256-0624

DFA Regional
Consular Office
5/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. Nos. (08822)
724-309
857-2175

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Yulo Street
Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033)
336-1737
337-8017

DFA –Mindanao
Doors 1 & 2, Tourism Complex
Magsaysay Park 8000
Davao City
Tel Nos. (802)
227-3900
227-0712
227-0713

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Upper Calarian,
Southcom Bldg.
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062)
991-4398
991-7958

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Transfield Bldg.
Pagdalagan Norte
San Fernando, La Union
Tel. Nos. (072)
888-3733
888-5484

DFA Regional
Consular Office
3/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Legaspi City
Tel. Nos. (052)
480-1773
245-5056

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Municipal Building
Tuguegarao, Cagayan Valley
Tel. No. (078)
846-2310

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Manpower Training Center
Better Living Subdivision,
Isabang, Lucena City
Tel. Nos. (042)
710-4526
373-1898

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Paskuhan Village
San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. Nos. (045)
963-1879
961-6638

(2) Application forms may also be obtained from the Regional Offices of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

(3) Application forms may also be downloaded from the Department of Foreign Affairs' website: www.dfa.gov.ph and the Civil Service Commission's website: www.csc.gov.ph .

Completed application forms together with the documentary requirements must be returned by the applicants themselves or by postal service to any of the DFA offices enumerated above not later than 5 April 2002 for evaluation and processing.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, March 16, 2002
4th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Jer 11:18-20
Gospel: Jn 7:40-53

Many who had been listening to these words began to say, "This is the Prophet." Others said, "This is the Christ." But some wondered, "Would the Christ come from Galilee? Doesn't Scripture say that the Christ is a descendant of David and from Bethlehem, the city of David?" The crowd was divided over him. Some wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him.

The officers of the Temple went back to the chief priests who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him?" The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man." The Pharisees then said, "So you, too, have been led astray! Have any of the rulers or any of the Pharisees believed in him? Only these cursed people, who have no knowledge of the Law!"

Yet one of them, Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier, spoke out, "Does our law condemn people without first hearing them and knowing the facts?" They replied, "Do you, too, come from Galilee? Look it up and see for yourself that no prophet is to come from Galilee."

And they all went home.

Commentary

The gospels these days present the dynamics of sin: a blindness, chosen, but denied. It all comes down to having something to defend which matters more to us than the truth. Those who actually listened to Jesus sensed his integrity. "No-one ever spoke like this man." . . . "Let's give him a fair hearing." Not so the others: "Cursed and ignorant people! Prophets from God-forsaken Galilee? Give us a break!" What is so terrible about sin is that even the power of God cannot heal our blindness against our will! After snubbing Nicodemus, the Pharisees went home. And Jesus? He went to the Mount of Olives. Go with him. "O Jerusalem, how often have I tried to bring together your children, as a bird gathers her young under her wings, but you refused." (Lk 13:34) You can bring joy to the world's true Light, by humbly offering your own blindness to be healed.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)

SUPREME COURT GUIDELINES

POLITICAL LAW (CONSTITUTIONAL LAW)—Right to a speedy trial applicable in both civil and criminal cases—The constitutional right to a "speedy disposition of cases" is not limited to the accused in criminal proceedings but extends to all parties in all cases, including civil and administrative cases, and in all proceedings, including judicial and quasi-judicial hearings. Hence, under the Constitution, any party to a case may demand expeditious action on all officials who are tasked with the administration of justice. However, the right to a speedy disposition of a case, like the right to a speedy trial, is deemed violated only when the proceedings is attended by vexatious, capricious, and oppressive delays; or when unjustified postponement of the trial are asked for and secured, or even without cause or justifiable motive a long period of time is allowed to elapse without the party having his case tried. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Gonzaga-Reyes, Third Division, Lopez v. Office of the Ombudsman, G.R. No. 140529, September 6, 2001]

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA

Manila is transit point . . .

From page A1

escaped the country again last year. "North Korea," he wrote, "is a gigantic prison."

South Korea said it would accept the 25 once it verified that they wanted to come to the South, underscoring Seoul's longstanding policy of accepting asylum seekers from the North.

The Philippines and Singapore served as third-country conduits in a similar incident in June last year when a family of seven walked into the United Nations office in Beijing and demanded political asylum.

In 1997, the Philippines served for the first time as a transit point for a North Korean defector. Hwang Jang-Yop, chief architect of North Korea's governing ideology of "juche," a creed of self-reliance, was then considered the most senior Pyongyang official ever to flee the impoverished North.

Hwang, 74, and his 59-year-old aide Kim Dukhong turned their backs on North Korea by walking into the South Korean consulate in Beijing.

At midday yesterday in Beijing, reporters outside the Spanish Embassy saw a convoy of two sport-utility vehicles, a van and the ambassador's Mercedes limousine pull out and drive away. The van and SUVs were crowded with people, but their darkened windows kept reporters from seeing who the passengers were.

"China's Foreign Ministry has consulted with the relevant embassy and has reached agreement with them. This matter will be handled in accordance with law. Please give it more patience. The result will be clear very soon," Premier Zhu Rongji said in a nationally televised news conference during the annual session of China's legislature.

Dilemma for China

The asylum bid presented a political dilemma for China, which is obliged by a treaty with Pyongyang to return fleeing North Koreans but risks alienating world opinion if it sends the asylum-seekers home to the hardline communist regime.

Human rights and aid groups have criticized China for sending back North Koreans caught fleeing famine and repression. ***Reports from Reuters and AP***

In slippers, Gloria does an Erap

From page A1

Oct. 1 last year for the first day of his historic plunder trial, he wore casual clothes and a pair of slippers as a form of protest. His slippers were made of expensive leather, however.

Yesterday, Ms Macapagal inaugurated the new market, and then distributed land titles to nearly half of the 2,700 squatter families in the National Government Center. She also awarded rights to 100 market stall owners under the government's livelihood assistance program.

During an intermission, when celebrity guest Rosanna Roces was singing the pop song "Sometimes When We Touch," the President surprised everyone by joining her. Ms Macapagal usually balks at singing in public.

Roces was already nearing the end of the song, having also sung with housing chief Mike Defensor and Sen. Francis Pangilinan, when the President joined her. She continued singing even after the song had ended, prompting Roces to gently point out, *"Ma'am, patapos na po."*

Good mood

Despite the heat, Ms Macapagal was in a good mood throughout the entire two-hour program, and even stayed on another hour for lunch.

But the President did not pass up her chance to fire a broadside at Estrada, who had successfully created an image for himself as a champion of the masses by, among other things, handing out land titles. Without mentioning her detained predecessor, Ms Macapagal said lot titles previously issued to the Payatas dumpsite residents were fake.

"Isn't it true that the problem (in Payatas) is how to come up with the (lot) titles because a lot of fake titles were issued? Three families would claim one lot," she said in Filipino.

She ordered housing officials to draft the needed presidential proclamation in six weeks so the residents can buy their lots from the government.

She also told the crowd of about 3,000 that it was Estrada who, in 1999, stopped the construction of the Commonwealth Market, a project begun during the Ramos administration. "It was only during my time that we released the funds again," she said.

Defensor said he hoped the new market would finally end the perennial traffic problems caused by illegal vending along the Manggahan strip on Commonwealth Avenue.

The presidential convoy did not encounter any Estrada ralliers during its 30-minute trip from Malacañang to the market. It passed by the Sandiganbayan around 9 a.m. Only anti-riot policemen, media vans and some onlookers stood outside. ***Dona Pazzibugan***

If I'm lucky . . .

From page A1

which began on Feb. 26, authorities have demolished more than 6,000 homes in Sabah squatter colonies and detained some 4,400 illegal residents.

The operation, the latest of several attempts to solve a decades-old problem for the state, drew impetus from the federal government's new get-tough policy on workers without permits.

An idling economy, security fears raised by the Sept. 11 attacks and hostage-taking by Filipino gunmen in raids on local resorts during 2000 have added resolve to the crackdown.

Identifying who should go and who should stay has been complicated by decades of inter-marriage between refugees and local people and a longer history that blurred the borders between the current Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

For Filipino Masri bin Kurais, a legal migrant sitting in what used to be his stilted home's main room before it was demolished, why matters less than what next.

"The authorities just came and said this illegal camp was to be cleared of squatters. We do not know what is the real reason behind it," said the 27-year-old father of three.

"We are already citizens of Sabah, we originate from Sabah, so we appeal to the government to help us by providing us with places to stay. If not, what can we do?"

All around, corrugated roofing lies at angles, dangling in putrid sea water turned black by years of rubbish and waste.

Police from Kota Kinabalu, the state capital five minutes away by speed boat, patrol rickety gangplanks checking papers and telling residents to move out.

Torn houses

Wrecking gangs with chainsaws and mallets sit around after a day spent tearing down homes, while soldiers loll under khaki tarpaulins, their M-16 rifles close to hand in case of trouble.

"Whether they are local people or if they're from outside, if they're not legal, what we have to do is to demolish their houses," Police Superintendent Mohd Akram Khan said.

The officer, based in a temporary operations room overlooking a ragtag group of children playing ball, says the limit to his authority is to raze the colony, not to find people a new one.

"I do not know whether the government has any program, whether they are going to resettle them or not," he says.

Sabah Chief Minister Chong Kah Kiat was quoted by Bernama news agency on March 10 promising homes for local people affected by the crackdown.

"Our operations are focused on the illegal immigrants but if there are locals whose homes have been demolished, we will arrange for a suitable site," he was quoted as saying.

No one quite knows how many illegal Filipinos and Indonesians live in Sabah.

Barter trading ties dating back hundreds of years and time spent under the Sultan of Sulu's 18th century reign means the fate of many families are entwined across today's borders with Indonesia and the Philippines.

An influx of 60,000 or so Filipino refugees to Sabah in the 1970s, fleeing the fighting between government troops and Muslim rebels in the Mindanao, sowed the seeds of the current problem.

Many married Sabahans and raised families, while waves of regular immigrants since have snapped up poorly paid jobs shunned by locals in forestry, oil palm plantations and farming.

Some local politicians muddied things further by handing fake ID cards to migrants in return for votes for them in elections.

"There are too many now unrecorded. We have got something like 500,000 of them inside Sabah," said Brigadier General Muhamad Yasin, the man responsible for state security.

No consulate

"They should be deported back otherwise we fear that if we don't do it now, a more serious problem will be faced by the Sabah government in dealing with them," Yasin said.

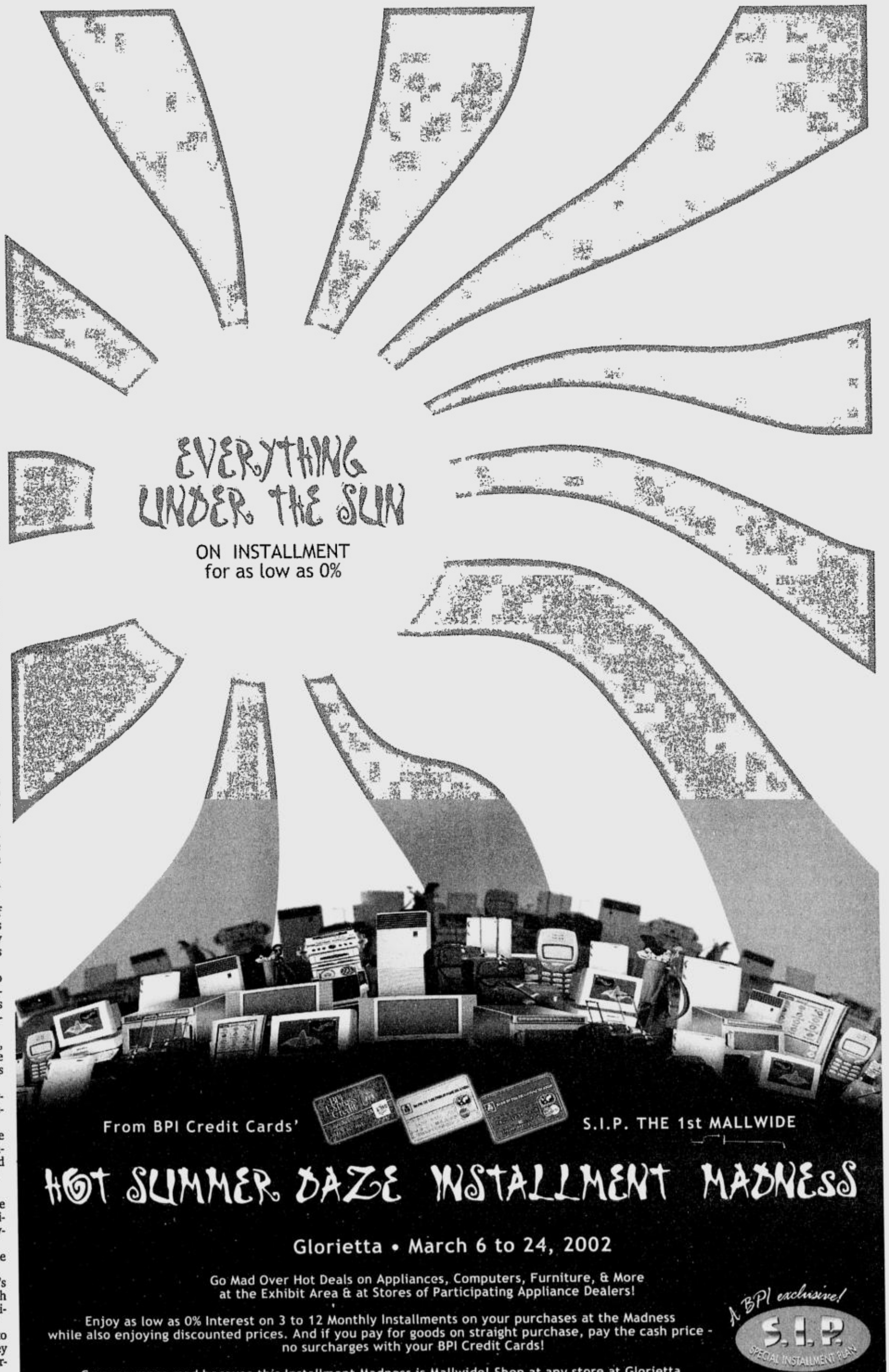
The state population was 2.5 million in the 2000 census.

Complicating matters further is Manila's continuing territorial claim to the state, which has made it harder to issue Sabah-based Filipinos with the necessary documents.

"The Philippine government is not willing to put their consulate here in Sabah because they say how can they put a consulate in their own territory," said Sabah legislator Wilfred Tangau.

The academic turned politician, a member of the ruling coalition of parties, said a major cause of immigrant problems lay in the southern Philippines' lack of development.

"If people want to be citizens, it should be strictly from the point of view of law. But we also have to help the Philippines with the 'push' factor," he said, a process demanding development spending in the migrants' place of origin. ***Reuters***



EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

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OPINION

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Revelation of weakness

EDITORIAL

THE ARRAIGNMENT of former President Joseph Estrada before the Sandiganbayan on a second charge of perjury came to pass yesterday without any trouble. Estrada appeared in court without his usual phalanx of family and supporters. Predictably, he pleaded neither guilty nor innocent, as he had done in the plunder and illegal use of alias charges; and he read a statement repeating the tired theme that he did not expect to get a fair trial from the courts. That statement earned him a reprimand from the presiding justice of the special Sandiganbayan division, who warned him to be careful with his language and to stop his reckless attacks on the Supreme Court and the Sandiganbayan.

The threat of a massive demonstration by his followers to block the convoy that transported him from the Veterans Memorial Medical Center did not materialize. Neither did the prospect of his being bundled bodily to the court. The handful of Estrada partisans easily made way for his security escort like butter being cut by knife.

Although Estrada remained defiant in his denunciation of the courts, and, indeed the judicial system, yesterday's arraignment was both a turning point and a revelation. The failure of Estrada and his followers to mobilize an unruly crowd was an indication that he can no longer incite the rabble to create disturbances, as it did during his arrest in April last year, to protest the process related to his trial. The old constituency of the disgraced leader does not respond any longer to political agitation by Estrada and his lawyers.

Estrada's dramatics that began with his dismissal of his lawyers, followed by a vicious attack on the judicial system in general and on the Supreme Court justices and the special Sandiganbayan division trying his cases in particular for allegedly rigging up the trial, fell on deaf ears.

If the threat of mob disorder fizzled out, one credible explanation is that the poor have at last come to realize that they had been manipulated to risk life and limb for their champion whose lifestyle is far removed from theirs. The poor can be fooled by demagogues some of the time but not all time, and if the small turnout at the demonstrations proved anything at all, it is that the poor have shown themselves to be more mature and intelligent than Estrada's lawyers. Too often, the better educated—lawyers included—have taken the poor for granted and taken advantage of their ignorance. Not any more.

If there had been a sizable demonstration, it is certain that Estrada could have played the numbers game in the streets to dramatize his line that he is a victim of persecution and of a conspiracy of the elite and the entire political, economic and judicial establishment. Estrada and his lawyers went too far when they took on the courts, the judicial system and the justices of the Supreme Court and questioned their fairness and even integrity.

The focus of the attack shifted from the Macapagal administration, which was ready to succumb to the threat of a rebellion of the poor and to negotiate his exit through the devious scheme of "parliamentary diplomacy," which in reality was an extra-judicial solution to a strictly judicial case.

Estrada is a creature of the mood of the streets, and he is wise enough to know that without an audience to respond to his cheap antics, the circus act is futile. The relatively calm arraignment proceedings further suggest that Estrada cannot tangle with the courts without him coming out second best and that, more emphatically, the courts are more credible than Estrada, rejecting his pathetic attempt to portray himself as a victim of judicial prosecution.

Another possible reason why turbulence didn't break out over his arraignment is that the police and the Armed Forces sent a clear message that they would not tolerate any nonsense from the Estrada camp and were ready to crush any unruly action from his cohorts.

From this test of will and strength, in which Estrada's capacity to incite unrest has been shown up to be a myth, the opportunity has now arrived for the Sandiganbayan to pursue the case to its speedy conclusion and to assert its authority to make Estrada and his lawyers behave with decorum inside the courtroom.

The gag order

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

IT is gratifying that all this current hullabaloo about Erap and his antics has not raised the hackles of the Special Division of the Sandiganbayan trying his case. Practically everyone has offered his two centavos worth, from the barbershop pundits to the scholarly commentators. Even Congress has joined the fray, unmindful of the separation of powers. No less than Speaker Jose de Venecia and three opposition senators want President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to intervene to avoid what they call a "political crisis."

Through all the hubbub, the Sandiganbayan has remained unperturbed, maintaining a proper judicial equanimity truly becoming an impartial and just tribunal. Despite the controversy swirling around the heads of Justices Minita Chico-Nazario, Edilberto Sandoval and Teresita de Castro, the Special Division has not, on pain of contempt, stopped public comment on the pending Estrada case. The message it is signaling is that it is not susceptible to extraneous suggestions and will base its decision only on the facts and the law as it sees them.

The Sandiganbayan draws the line, however, on Estrada and his counsel in an order issued by its Third Division, copy of which Rene Saguisag sent me in hopes of my dissenting reaction. The order prohibits Erap et al. from talking about their case except when being interviewed by the media within the court premises only and for not more than 10 minutes. Signed by Justices Teresita de Castro, Narciso S. Nario and Nicodemo T. Ferrer on Jan. 14, 2002, it is presumably still effective notwithstanding the take-over of the Special Division.

I do dissent. I fail to see the logic in this order. More than anyone else, it is Estrada and his lawyers who have a right to speak in his defense and at any time and place. The Third Division apparently believes that any comment they wish to make must be confined only in the precincts of the court and not elsewhere. That is a narrow view of the Bill of Rights. I submit that any person accused of a crime has a right to defend himself *anywhere*, and not only in the courts of justice.

While Estrada's conduct as a detention prisoner is subject to restriction, that restriction does not cover the curtailment of his freedom of expression. Erap does not leave that freedom behind when he leaves the premises of the Sandiganbayan. He has the right to protest his innocence now and, if found guilty later, to protest his conviction in his prison cell. Ironically, this right may not be available to him if he escapes or is exiled (which is the same thing) to another country with less regard for individual liberties.

The gag order becomes all the more indefensible if it is considered that no similar ban, as far as I know, has been issued against the prosecution. Ombudsman Aniano Desierto has been crowing through the media that he has enough evidence to convict Erap even as the defense has been insisting that they have enough evidence to acquit him. I do not mean by this that Desierto and his staff should also be gagged like Estrada and his battery of lawyers. What I am saying is that *neither* Estrada nor Desierto should be prevented from expressing their respective views in or outside the courtroom.

The trial of a former president for, among other crimes, the capital offense of plunder is the first in the history of our country. Naturally, the people are interested in its outcome and have the right to discuss it among themselves. Some TV shows freely invite its audience to express their observations on the controversy and others even conduct informal surveys. It is true that the public will not decide the Estrada case. Nevertheless, the Sandiganbayan cannot block the ventilation of opinion about it on the ground that this may influence its decision. This prohibition would contradict its own assurance that it is not susceptible to such influence.

Desierto and practically all other persons, from the editorial writers and the columnists to the-know-it-all radio announcers, let alone the politicians, have expressed views pro and con about the case. Although it is possible and even likely that their comments may influence its decision, the Sandiganbayan has maintained its cool and refuses to be baited (except by Estrada). It probably understands, and rightly so, that the probability of its yielding to such influence is no justification for silencing the people.

According to Justice Louis D. Brandeis of the US Supreme Court, "It is the function of free speech to free men from the bondage of irrational fears." The fear that the Sandiganbayan will be controlled by public opinion and not the rule of law is an irrational fear. Even if it were not, it would still not excuse the suppression of the people's right to speak freely about this vital topic "that touches the heart of the existing order." Freedom of speech should never be suppressed to protect the courts from their own weakness.

Waging peace

COMMENTARY

Junefe G. Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issue

If the public's outrage at the showing of the gruesome footage of the beheadings is any indication, it seems that most people are not so hardened after all

UPON ARRIVING at the Zamboanga International Airport recently, I was greeted by posters that said in Chavacano, "Bomb Threats: El Debe o No Debe Hace (Bomb Threats: What To Do and What Not To Do)." I would later find out that these were posted all around the city—in restaurants, in banks, on campus gates and on church entrances. The many posters either meant that bomb explosions were becoming a common occurrence in the city or that the people were preparing for some. Either way, it was a scary welcome.

Not unexpectedly, during my stay there to interview long-time peace advocates, a homemade bomb exploded in a movie house, injuring several people. Some believed it was the handiwork of the Abu Sayyaf or its sympathizers who wanted to create chaos in the city, which is being used as a jump-off point to Basilan by Philippine and American military forces. The Philippine military, with the help of its American counterpart, is waging war against the Abu Sayyaf in the jungles of Basilan, which is less than an hour away by boat across the strait from Zamboanga City.

For several weeks now, the government has been trying hard to win nationwide support for the joint military exercises. First, it labeled anti-Balikatan protesters as "Abu Sayyaf lovers" and then it released gruesome footage of soldiers being beheaded by Abu Sayyaf rebels. Anti-Balikatan groups, on the other hand, have been waging their fight on the streets, in the courts and in the media.

It's a chaotic picture. And this is what we have been waking up to every single morning these past weeks.

The peace problem in Mindanao has been there for decades. Indeed, building peace in Mindanao is a very difficult process because the conflicts on the island are rooted in socio-political and ethno-religious factors.

Fortunately, there are still people on the island who have chosen to wage peace instead of war, harmony instead of chaos. They don't make it to the headlines but it seems that they are the only real good guys in all of this.

Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, PIME, founder of the oldest peace and dialogue movement in Mindanao, is one of them. He recalls that when he arrived in Zamboanga City in 1983, he realized that fear and prejudice very much characterized the relations between Muslims and Christians. So on May 1984, after prayer and consultations with Muslim and Christian leaders, he founded the Silsilah Dialogue Movement.

The goal of the movement is to promote deeper understanding and harmonious relations between Muslims and Christians. It runs a dialogue institute with a Muslim and Christian staff who pray together before going to their respective work assignments.

The most popular activity of the institute is the Muslim-Christian Dialogue Summer Course (now on its 16th year) which attracts participants not only from all over the Philippines but even from other countries. Various religious groups and social development organizations send their members to this month-long course which gives Christian participants the chance to live with Muslim families and Muslim participants with Christian families.

The cynic might scoff at the seeming naiveté of such an approach to peace in Mindanao. True, the conflicts in Mindanao are by no means fueled solely by ethno-religious differences, but it is very important to address this crucial, if not fundamental, aspect.

Another institution struggling to build peace in Mindanao is the Prelature of Isabela in Basilan. Aside from encouraging dialogue between Muslims and Christians, the prelature provides psychological trauma-healing services to widows of Abu Sayyaf victims and to released or rescued child victims. Last year, the prelature debriefed and sheltered children who were released by or rescued from Abu Sayyaf kidnappers.

Miriam Suacito, the coordinator of the inter-religious dialogue desk of the prelature, said that healing is very important to any peace initiative. She said that many studies have suggested that serious conflicts arise periodically in the so-called hotspots (such as Basilan) because the children who experienced war or violence many years before—but were not healed—continue to harbor violence so that when they grow up, the hidden violence manifests itself.

She also lamented that while the national government and cause-oriented groups are debating whether the Balikatan exercises infringe on our national sovereignty, nobody is concerned about the welfare of the people of Basilan, especially the widows and the children.

Perhaps, we are by now hardened by the endless news of conflicts and violence with which we are being bombarded every day. Perhaps we have come to accept the idea that war is the only reality in Mindanao or anywhere. Or perhaps not. If the public's outrage at the showing of the gruesome footage of the beheadings is any indication, it seems that most people are not so hardened after all.

Our human nature still is to wage peace.

Erap should consider plea-bargain

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THAT the pro-Erap crowd has thinned out considerably was evident in yesterday's resumption of the trial of his plunder case. While there is still a segment of the population that sympathizes with his plight, the big crowd is gone partly because President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has succeeded in making inroads into the depressed areas where the Erap recruits come from, and partly because the people are beginning to understand what the justice system is all about.

* * *

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, appearing in the Channel 13 TV special hosted by Jarius Bondoc the other evening, first articulated the idea that he is now proposing to the Sandiganbayan's Special Division. Perez is proposing that the division, chaired by Sandiganbayan Acting Presiding Justice Minita Chico-Nazario, hold the trial right at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center instead of making Estrada go to the graft court three times a week. Perez argues that this would entail less elaborate security preparations and would therefore be less expensive and simpler on everyone's part.

Sen. Joker Arroyo and Prof. Ma. Lourdes Sereno of the UP College of Law, who were also guests on that show, observed, however, that such a special arrangement would set a bad precedent. Queried Arroyo: What would stop, say, detained former MNLF chief Nur Misuari, from asking for similar privileges? Sereno pointed out that if the graft court, after careful determination, rules favorably on a change of venue, it must be made clear why this exception is being made, so as not to encourage other accused to invoke it again. Sereno also stressed that what's important is to make the citizens understand that the judicial system has to be upheld and that the judiciary should be defended from attacks.

* * *

My initial reaction was to agree with Arroyo and Sereno. Hasn't Estrada received enough concessions with his air-conditioned suite at the VMMC and almost unlimited access to the media? But yesterday, looking at the tremendous security arrangements put up by the PNP to make sure nothing untoward would happen, I think Perez is correct in proposing the transfer of Erap's trial to the hospital compound. This would be the more sensible and practical recourse, since Estrada would be safer. Rallies from both sides could be kept at bay and it would be less expensive to the taxpayers. The policemen who are fielded every time Erap goes to the Sandiganbayan can return to their task of securing our streets from criminal elements. The justices trying the case can then work in peace and finish the trial speedily.

My readers will recall that I was among those in the media who advocated holding the trial at the VMMC even before it began. Sure, it's an extraordinary measure, but this is not your usual trial.

* * *

During the TV discussion, we touched on the P3.2-billion account of "Jose Velarde." Perez was asked about his reaction to Estrada's alibi that he merely guaranteed a loan to a friend. Perez said that if this were true, it was quite strange that Estrada would use another name. "Why didn't he want to use his own name?"

Joker Arroyo stressed that the Velarde account was only one of a number of bank accounts of Erap, and among these were the so-called "airplane accounts." These were numbered bank accounts (therefore with no names attached to them) corresponding to airplane models such as the 747 series and the Airbus 300. "Erap found time to play around with airplanes in building up his accounts," said Arroyo. He related that in the process of searching for the Erap bank accounts during the Senate impeachment trial, he, Perez and the other prosecutors did not include on the list those Erap accounts in amounts of P10 million or so, as these were just small items ("*panuklí*," as Bondoc put it). The prosecutors concentrated on those with P70 million or more in deposits, which were "*marami talaga*." Arroyo also opined that the prosecution now has much more evidence than they had during the impeachment trial, and that all of these would be used against Erap in his plunder trial.

Asked whether the P3.2-billion Velarde account was ever sequestered, Arroyo said that Erap succeeded in withdrawing it on the day the impeachment trial opened.

* * *

During that TV special, we also discussed the question of a presidential pardon for Erap. Sereno pointed out that this can only be extended after a conviction.

Arroyo then raised the idea of Estrada going into some kind of plea-bargaining. This refers to an arrangement between the prosecutor and the defendant whereby the latter pleads guilty to a lesser crime in the expectation of getting a lighter sentence. Arroyo said that if Erap were to admit his guilt, he could qualify for a very much lighter sentence and perhaps eventually for presidential pardon.

Sereno pointed out that under the rules drawn up by the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, admission of guilt is a mitigating circumstance and a sentence such as reclusion perpetua or life imprisonment could end up as reclusion mayor, or imprisonment of only a few years, punishment which can be erased by pardon from the President. However, Sereno pointed out that plea-bargaining would not wipe out the civil liabilities, and the forfeiture cases would have to continue.

If, as Arroyo said, the evidence against Estrada is overwhelming, he should perhaps seriously consider plea-bargaining.

Thoughts of a teacher on graduation day

YOUNGBLOOD

Hazel P. Villa

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

LAST March 7, my first batch of high school students graduated, and I heaved my first great sigh of relief as a teacher after having survived a million activities and one generation of rambunctious hobbits in uniforms.

My teaching career started only four moons earlier when I jumped from the frying pan of full-time journalism into the fire of the academe. Did I enjoy getting burned?

I taught Creative Writing to a total of four students, three of whom marched to (un)glory on that day and a junior who will remain with me to be tormented on the vagaries of grammar, the caring of the writing muse and punctilious punctuality.

I got an enlightening look into the much-maligned world of teaching in public schools when I was made to teach English to 26 seniors for one month and 33 juniors for one semester. Therein lay the many mysteries of the teaching life that I have yet to fathom. Maybe, when I am 40 years into teaching, I will finally be able to decipher those mysteries or maybe never.

Why is it that when I made the seniors write simple sentences for our grammar class, only a few passed the grade-five level, but when I made them write an essay on relationships after a discussion of Khalil Gibran's "On Love," they became sons and daughters of Shakespeare overnight? Is good grammar divorced from poetry and literature? Pray tell, Virginia.

On to classroom management. I have learned that you can teach juniors the Greek and Latin stems of English words to help them with their vocabulary, but until the day I die, I don't think they will be able to clean the classroom on their own or throw the contents of the water dispenser even if it overflows to the floor. Such are the mysteries of the teaching life.

Ours is a Special Program for the Arts, hence, a place for *special* people—"special" in that special way that psychiatrists would describe some patients. In our school, students major in dance, music, visual arts, theater, creative writing and media arts. They have academic classes in the mornings and spend the afternoons getting lessons in their major fields.

How do I explain students who dance while carrying ordinary conversations? Or someone who lets out a banshee shriek in the middle of the corridor? Or an actor-wannabe who impersonates GMA's Mike Enriquez in the faculty room whenever he feels like it? What does one make of students enduring run-throughs at 1:30 a.m. or doing a technical rehearsal eight hours before a recital?

Nah, we teachers don't become "special" like our students, though some of us are on the verge of succumbing to the temptation to catch flies someday. We accept the fact that this is a Special Program for the Arts and there are mysteries we have to live with.

While in teacher's college at the university across the street from our school, I should have taken seriously my professor's warning that one must prepare hard to be a teacher because there are "a thousand and one responsibilities." Boy, was he wrong. There are a million and one responsibilities, as any teacher in the country's most effective secondary school for 2001 knows.

Such responsibilities in different degrees run the gamut of preparing bulletin boards, putting flowers on a vase, "artistically" guiding misguided young folk, drying a student's tears, terrorizing bullheaded ones, sweeping the faculty room, writing speeches, letters and declamations, and chatting with the likes of film director Peque Gallaga and singer Jose Mari Chan during programs as well as a million other things that keep you awake till the wee hours of the morning. When will we ever have Jericho Rosales for guest speaker?

Bureaucracy-mangled government employees can probably sympathize with many teachers like me when we did not receive our salaries for two months because the Filipino way dictated that the papers granting our salary increase remain in the hallowed offices of the Department of Education for some time and pass through a labyrinth before they are approved.

So, when I went up the stage and received my first certificate as Outstanding Teacher and heard the principal whisper that it came with a cash gift, the heavens opened and the angels sang hallelujah so loudly that I heard it.

Hazel P. Villa, 28, teaches at the Iloilo National High School-Special Program for the Arts and writes part-time for the INQUIRER.

Tempest at the GSIS

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A NEWS photo showing Government Service Insurance System employees walking out and protesting against GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia indicates the deteriorating situation in that government agency.

Actually, the walkout and protests are only the latest in a series of troubles and controversies that have rocked the GSIS since the takeover of Garcia soon after Edsa Dos. In fact, it was the appointment of Garcia, among a bunch of incompetents and influence-peddlers who managed to snag positions in the new government, that sowed the seeds of disillusionment among President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's erstwhile supporters.

Now, after the tussle over reinsurance policies with Napocor, the abrupt departure of COA personnel after a petty vendetta by Garcia, and several other instances of mismanagement, the employees are protesting the action taken against a union official over something that took place during, of all occasions, last year's Christmas party.

Before the party there was talk that Garcia was going to announce an additional bonus for all employees. So all present waited with anticipation for the announcement, only to have their hopes dashed when Garcia closed his speech without saying anything about a bonus.

As the concerned union official explains it: having nothing to hang on to "except the feeling of frustration...in spontaneous human reaction all of us (union) officers and the rest of the KMG (the GSIS workers' union) members as well, (started shouting) 'Winston *barat* (Winston cheapskate)!'" The chanting was likewise accompanied by hissing and booing from other employees "who perhaps were also experiencing the same frustration."

* * *

A BIGGER man might have shrugged off the incident, but Garcia instead chose to retaliate for what might have been a cause for personal humiliation. He also chose to focus his wrath on one man, Ciriaco Sabilano, who is division chief of the physical security department and also a union official.

Charged with grave misconduct, Sabilano was placed under preventive suspension for 90 days even as he was asked to explain in writing his conduct at the party.

In his explanation, Sabilano said he was not the only employee at the party to chant "Winston *barat*!" and neither did he lead in the chanting. But even so, he says, the chanting falls under freedom of expression. "Employees of (other) government agencies also demonstrate even against the President of the Philippines. What they shout during such demonstrations are sometimes unprintable...and yet no charges have been filed against them," he points out.

GSIS employees have also sent documents detailing serious charges of malfeasance against Garcia, and in the scheme of things, these would seem to merit more serious investigation and action than the heckling of disgruntled employees.

* * *

EDI Tekeli, the manager of the Mango store who figured in a dispute with a customer, airs his side against that of Paula Laput. Laput had complained about being maltreated by Tekeli when she complained about a discrepancy between the price tag and the computer POS (point of sale) price for a dress she wanted to buy from Mango.

As Tekeli tells it, the price tag on the dress that Laput chose did contain the "right" price of P3,899, but she complained only after she spotted an identical dress on the racks that bore a lower price tag. She refused to listen to explanations that the second price tag was a mistake, says Tekeli, and Laput's mother even turned "violent and unruly" when they confronted the cashier. Needless to say, Tekeli feels no need to apologize to Laput, declaring that "Mango cannot allow this episode, where it is in the right, to tarnish its image."

A reading of the flurry of e-mail that this incident generated, however, shows that most Filipinos have taken Laput's side, using it to launch tirades against the way Filipinos are mistreated in our own country by foreigners.

For her part, Laput writes that after she filed a formal complaint with Ayala management (in whose mall the Mango store was located) and with the Mango home office in Spain, Tekeli called her at home and began shouting at her and threatening to file charges against her. I suggest that Paula, apart from reporting the Mango store manager to the Department of Trade and Industry for violation of the retail trade act, also sue Tekeli for harassment.

* * *

TRULY, Filipino consumers need all the protection they can get!

Lydia D. Castillo writes in behalf of her daughter Doreen and son-in-law Neric Paccanuayan and their less-than-rewarding experience with Days Hotels' "Best Club."

Early last year, Neric and Doreen paid P2,000 for membership in "Best Club" for which they got vouchers guaranteeing free overnight accommodations at any Best hotel in the country and 60 percent discount off rack rates for succeeding nights. With membership expiring in February this year, the couple called Best Club last January to make reservations. Imagine their surprise when Soxy Ampil, a customer service officer, informed them that "Best Club" had been closed since September last year!

When the couple complained, Ampil held out some hope, asking them to fax her all the pertinent documents and she would check with their legal department. "It has been nearly two months that they have been chasing the hotel/club people," writes Castillo, yet everyone from Days Hotel "seems to have just all disappeared!"

Let this serve as a warning against falling for such marketing gimmicks. Calling the DTI (again) and Department of Tourism! Is there no way you can protect consumers from such scams?

Readers' response

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

BUTCH Tan from Mandaluyong City: "Our architectural heritage is fast disappearing. Thank God the FEU authorities have no plans to demolish or 'renovate' the Morayta structure."

I inadvertently deleted the name of this reader but his/her comments may strike a chord: "We all are hearing about anti-US protests around the world...especially from Left-leaning media outlets. These protesters number in the hundreds or sometimes in the thousands. The largest I heard of in Pakistan was about 20,000. Have you heard about the anti-terror march in Karachi on Sept. 26 that expressed sympathy for the victims in New York and expressed solidarity with worldwide efforts against terrorism? The only violence was a grenade attack on the marchers launched by extremists. It was far larger than any of the anti-US protests—about 200,000 marchers—and it was peaceful except, of course, for the grenade attack. I find the under-reporting of events like this to be an indictment of many media outlets. See http://www.mqm.org/English-News/Sep2001/rallyagainstterrorism.htm."

Pablo Baldazo: "Thank you for writing something about this issue. Truly, there's a need to connect ourselves to the 'past' by restoring our churches to their original structures or closer to what they were before. Priests and bishops should be reminded once again that the sense of 'beauty' is also very close to the sense of 'holiness.' You're dead right that the 'poor' deserve also to see beautiful things, not just be brainwashed with 'hidden agenda' of those cheap 'reformists' *kuno* in our churches; that our church should look 'very poor and ugly' to immerse herself with the poor.

"I suggest that each diocese in the Philippines should have a commission on Church projects composed of liturgists, artists, architects and the like to monitor those parish priests who still think, '*Como cura consolo* cura!'

"In the Philippines, some people are poor and persecuted not because of American influence but in spite of it. We should blame the Filipino ruling class from the time of President Quezon to the time of President Estrada. It is my strong opinion that President Quezon was at the root of most Philippine problems, especially because of his vision that it is better to have a Philippines ruled like hell by Filipinos than ruled by Americans like heaven. Actually, we should blame many Filipino leaders since the time of Quezon to the present time for being more focused on enriching their...families at the public's expense. The Philippines is not unique in having less than desirable leaders but it appears that the country is right on top in this category. I can see hope though at the present time since I see more and more Filipinos having a good understanding of what it takes to make the country better. I am beginning to believe that Ms Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is measuring up to what we should expect of a good leader to make the country attain a better and stable future."

Reader Daniel agrees that "it would be interesting research to see how many representatives are green-card holders and own houses abroad. The anti-American folks seem to have little concern about the shadow China casts over the Philippines. That oversight is rather revealing."

Luis Calleja e-mailed this piece: "I'm originally from Legazpi City and I'm aware that there was once an Albay governor named Jose Peñaranda during Spain's rule and except for a street named after him and an old statue honoring him, fronting the Provincial Capitol (this was in the 1950s), which was subsequently destroyed in the 1960s in one of those periodic typhoons that visit Southern Luzon [when some smart provincial bureaucrat decided to use the base of the statue as an anchor for a big Christmas tower], he would have been consigned to oblivion except for your article on Juan.

"On a clear day on the highway as one approaches Tabaco, Batan Island can be seen and it's amazing to think that in the 1800s there were Aetas on the island. I'm not sure if Albay has still indigenous Aetas or maybe they've moved to some parts of Luzon [just like most modern Filipinos now, moving to greener pastures]."

Pinky Alinea doesn't believe all policemen are corrupt. "I cannot help but feel sorry for all those honest men and women who make up the local police force and who wish to indeed close all those open folders of unsolved crimes. We all know that one major cause for the low rate of solving these nefarious deeds can be traced to the big C: corruption accompanied by general ennui of the heads of the police department. It is so unfair to all those policemen/women who still give a d—n about their job (and try to do it well despite an incoming tide of tsunami proportions) to be lumped in a vat together with those who are only in that particular career for what fringe benefits they can get along the way.

"It has been many years since I have gone 'home.' I can only conclude that since the criminal elements continue to do brisk business as usual, there is at least one maxim in this world that I can depend on and that will always remain the same in the Philippines: Money not only makes the world go round but it also feathers beds."

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO...?

Dacer-Corbito murder

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice charged 22 men, including 13 policemen, with double murder for the Nov. 24, 2000 abduction and killing of public relations man Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito. The highest-ranking police official charged was Supt. Glenn Dumlao. He was arrested on June 4, 2001 at the Victory Liner terminal in Pasay City.

The case was filed in the Manila Regional Trial Court on May 11, 2001. It was raffled off to Branch 41 Judge Rodolfo Ponferrada on May 17.

The defense immediately moved to quash the information, citing lack of jurisdiction. But the court denied it on June 28, saying since one of the acts happened in Manila, it therefore had territorial jurisdiction over it. Dacer and Corbito were abducted in Manila and killed in Cavite.

Earlier on May 18, Insp. Danilo Villanueva, one of the accused, filed a motion for reinvestigation. The prosecution likewise asked for a reinvestigation to examine Villanueva's testimony implicating Senior Superintendents Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao, PO3 Larry Ambre and a certain "Rigor." The court granted both motions and directed the Department of Justice to conduct a reinvestigation.

On Aug. 14, the DOJ issued a resolution recommending that Villanueva be discharged from the information. At the same time, it recommended the indictment of SPO3 Allan Cadenilla and the inclusion among the respondents of Mancao, Aquino and Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña. It also asked for the discharge of Dumlao and three others so they could be used as state witnesses.

The prosecution then filed a motion to admit an amended information in which the DOJ recommendations were incorporated.

The court ordered Villanueva released on Aug. 16. But on Oct. 1 it refused to accept the amended information.

The prosecution asked for reconsideration but this was denied. On Nov. 16, the prosecution asked for the judge's inhibition, which Ponferrada granted on Nov. 22. The case was raffled off to the sala of Judge Edelwina Pastoral of Branch 18.

Case status: The court heard the prosecution's motion for the inclusion of additional accused on Feb. 22, 2002. Three civilians whom the DOJ wanted to use as state witnesses are still detained at the NBI, while those who were in the custody of the CIDG were transferred to the Manila City Jail. Dumlao is in the custody of the PNP's Intelligence Group. Except for Mancao, Aquino and Viña, all the accused police officers are under preventive suspension. Mancao and Aquino are out of the country.

Armin P. Adina, PDI Research Department

Cheaper medicines from gov't

I SALUTE Trade Secretary Mar Roxas II and Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit for the program "Presyong Tama, Gamot Pampamilya." The parallel importation of essential drugs cuts down the price of medicines to fair levels. Surely this will lessen the burden of the Filipino consumers, especially those afflicted with chronic ailments such as diabetes, asthma, hypertension, bronchitis and other infections.

My father suffers from diabetes with a complication of tuberculosis. He spends almost P300 daily for his complete set of medicines. His Humulin R (Neutral human insulin) for diabetes costs almost P850 per bottle a month. Indeed, the bloated cost of medicines will make anybody poor.

According to an article in The Philippine Consumer Reports, the prices of medicines are 40 percent to 70 percent lower in neighboring Asian countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. While the prices of medicines in government hospital pharmacies in the country are slightly lower, the overall price is still quite high. The answer to this is the "Presyong Tama, Gamot Pampamilya" program.

Why not make cheaper but equally effective medicines available to Filipino families? We urge all local government units to cooperate with the Department of Trade and Industry and the Department of Health to ensure the success of this project. This will benefit us all, especially the marginalized.

—JUDY ANNE R. YABUT, Pacita Complex, Biñan, Laguna

'Bongbong' the only son of Marcos

I WOULD like to state categorically that the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos has only one son, in the person of Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr.

The person claiming to be a son of the former president, Tiburcio Villamor Tan Marcos, who was sentenced to four years in prison by Deputy Judge Julia Livesay of Hong Kong, for using false documents to try to withdraw US$90 billion from a nonexistent bank account, is as fraudulent as his actions.

I have been a very, very close personal family friend and was a confidante of the late president, long before he got married, way back in 1945. I was with him during his years as a congressman, senator, president, the martial law period and even after the Edsa Revolution which led to his "exile" in Hawaii. I believe that all sorts of devious persons are doing things just to get into the "news," so to speak, and I cannot simply let such slurs on the memory and family of a very close friend go unanswered.

—REP. ROQUE R. ABLAN JR., First District, Ilocos Norte

Why send bad cops to provinces?

THIS is in reaction to the letters of Tita Pilapil Reverente and Lagrimas Galang of Quezon City, supporting the decision of NCR Director Edgar Aglipay to transfer erring policemen to the provinces.

I am always amused every time this issue comes up. Policemen in the National Capital Region are always threatened with transfer to the provinces if they commit mistakes. Now they have a new reason for such transfer and that is to make the NCR a "viable place."

This attitude shows the insensitivity of some people in the NCR who feel that bad policemen are ruining their "safe place" and they have to be transferred to other places which are not "safe" like the provinces. They talk as if they didn't come from the provinces where they once belonged. It is a good example of how selfish the people in Metro Manila are. They do not consider the plight of other people.

I believe Aglipay was once assigned in the provinces during his days as a junior officer. He is supposed to be mature enough to know the feelings of other Filipinos outside Metro Manila. It sends a wrong signal to the people in the countryside when cops assigned to their area have bad records in the big city. No wonder *jueteng* and kidnapping proliferate.

It doesn't really make a difference if these cops are transferred to places outside of Metro Manila. Petty and heinous crimes still happen in the NCR, making it more dangerous than any province.

After being here in Davao City for two years, I now understand why some people in the provinces are angry at the national government. They feel that the officials they voted for only serve the "Filipinos" living in Metro Manila.

—LUISITO M. CASTILLO, Central Park, Davao City

Long road to making SSS payments

BEING an employer member of the Social Security System, I went last Feb. 26 to the Prudential Bank in Angeles City to pay my SSS contributions. A clerk told me they had run out of special bank receipts (SBR).

I proceeded to the Bank of Philippine Islands, and after a long wait for my turn, the clerk at the new accounts section told me they also had no SBR.

I did not lose hope and went to the Philippine National Bank which has a big hall allotted for SSS transactions. The information clerk told me they did not have any SBR.

Not wanting to give up easily, I went to the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. The security guard who met me at the door asked me if I was a depositor. When I said no, he advised me to take a place at a very long queue of clients so that I could inquire from the teller if the bank would accept my payments.

After looking at the long line, I left and went to the Equitable PCI Bank. There I learned they had the forms but they refused to accept my payment saying it was one month late (I was paying for the period January to June 2002, and it was already Feb. 26, 2002).

So after traveling 12 kilometers and spending five hours to pay my obligation, I went home without accomplishing anything. This is another sample of Filipino inefficiency, indifference and stupidity.

—LIONEL M. DIZON, Mabalacat, 2010 Pampanga

The story of Saguisag's life

JOKER Arroyo and the rest of us in the human rights community detest Ping Lacson as a human rights violator. We sued him in 1982 for being such. The plaintiffs won but he appealed to the Court of Appeals. But, as to what retired Justice Isagani A. Cruz wrote in his column last March 9 on Lacson and drug trafficking, my own sources in the intelligence and Tsinoy communities say he is clean here. Senate reports must have findings of fact. Here, the case against Lacson may collapse, but not in his troubling Kuratong Baleleng massacre links.

As to *compañero* Raul J. Palabrica, I continue to have faith in the many good men and women in the judiciary. I am troubled though by the creation of the special court in the case of Erap. Why is there none for the cases of Evelio Javier, the Marcoses, Nur Misuari, et al.?

I did say in open court last Feb. 27 that I did not trust the Sandiganbayan Special Division, which insisted on thrice a week hearings. I saw it as railroading a case to be tried with the speed of light, and said so.

Over the weekend, I went to see a detainee in an area where the rebels are growing in strength. I will not be taunted by Palabrica into giving up my profession that gives me the ability to help the poor and/or oppressed, as I have done all my life, including in the kangaroo proceedings of the martial law years. I hope to see the judgment against Lacson affirmed in a case that is now on its 21st year.

As to Edward Serapio, like Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, he also suffers needlessly. Both are charged with only one count—contributing allegedly to the crime of plunder—and should therefore be entitled to bail, but they are treated as plunderers themselves. A year ago, Serapio asked for a bail hearing for himself, which he never got because the Sandiganbayan in effect said, it is Erap we want and just you wait. Poor Ed and Jinggoy.

I get bashed for helping the Estradas try to get a fair trial and to give credibility to the exercise. Opposed philosophically to the death penalty, I won't make its imposition easy. Standing up for human rights (including the right to life), constitutionalism, due process, the presumption of innocence and the rule of law is the story of my life.

—R.A.V. SAGUISAG, 4045 Bigasan St., Palanan, Makati City

Putting high school kids online

OUT of a total of close to 4,000 public high schools, only 1,130 have computer laboratories. If only one out of four public high schools have computers in this knowledge age, what chance do we have?

The "PCs for Public High School" project of Intel Phils., the Japanese government and Departments of Trade and Industry, Education, and Science will improve our chances. But will this be enough?

The project is on the right track, but it should be accelerated from its present target of 1,000 schools.

Instead of worrying about former President Estrada not having a lawyer, the government should be concerned with putting high school kids online.

—ANGELY MORELOS, 77 Malibay St., Pasay City

Diwalwal caught in web of legal cases

ALLOW us to clarify recent news reports alleging that Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez has succeeded in softening the stand of Mindanao legislators opposing his confirmation before the Commission on Appointments. These apparently angered some congressmen who denied the news report.

The news items were not press releases from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources as claimed by some lawmakers. Alvarez in fact welcomes the opposition being lodged against him by all sectors concerned, especially on the Mt. Diwalwal issue which is being taken up by the Mindanao Legislators Association.

Although he has addressed this issue way back as senator and chair of the Senate committee on environment where he investigated and supported, if not initiated action on this issue, Alvarez cannot solve this 18-year old conflict in the short span of time that he has been environment chief. Diwalwal is not just an environmental issue. It is mired in various cases pending before the courts. Almost every action of the DENR is questioned in court, preventing the immediate resolution of the problem which has outlived four presidents and nine environment secretaries.

Since 1998, the decision of the Mines Adjudication Board (MAB) on ownership issues was appealed by the contending parties to the Supreme Court who referred the case to the Court of Appeals where it is still pending resolution. There are also individual and collective cases filed against former environment secretaries by other claimants.

On March 3, 2000, then President Estrada lifted an order stopping mining operations in Diwalwal, a move which will take another presidential order to undo.

Upon assuming office in April last year, Alvarez asked the Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau (MOB) to strictly monitor the activities in the area and their impact on river systems, agricultural lands and other affected areas. He ordered the relocation of pollution-causing carbon-in-pulp (CIP) processing plants to government-designated mineral processing zones and strictly enforced the chemical control orders on mercury and cyanide, toxic chemicals used in the processing of gold ores. He also pursued Phase II of a United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Unido)-United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-DENR-MGB Project to come up with a final action plan on the pollution problem. He regularly conducts dialogues with the fragmented miners' groups and other stakeholders in Diwalwal because without their cooperation, all efforts of the government will only be an exercise in futility.

Alvarez is now talking to members of Congress to explain his side on issues raised against him and he is optimistic that he has adequately addressed them. He views the opposition against him as opportunities for enlightened discussions.

—HORACIO C. RAMOS, director, Mines and Geo-Sciences Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

LETTERS

Is he really a human rights crusader?

I WAS so surprised to see the advertisement of Eliseo Soriano and lawyer Leonard de Vera printed on your paper last Feb. 27. The advertisement showed a reproduction of their letter to National Bureau of Investigation Director Reynaldo Wycoco.

My initial reaction was to say, "What a waste!" Millions of Filipinos can barely eat three square meals a day and here comes Soriano purchasing a full-page advertisement simply to give vent to his personal grievances against the NBI (as if his daily whining on his five-hour show were not enough). I'm curious to know how much of his congregation's offerings Soriano used to pay for the advertisement, not to mention the services of De Vera and his staff. Isn't there anyone from Soriano's organization who is bothered by his spending habits?

As I read through the letter, there were some statements that caught my attention. For example: "What shocks our decency is the manner with which this warrant was served." "The attempt to serve the warrants at that commercial center was purposely made to publicly embarrass and humiliate Bro. Eli Soriano." "More disturbing was the imposing number of unnecessary law enforcers who tried to serve the warrant." "We need more policemen in the streets rather than using them to serve warrants on peaceful citizens."

These are noble statements. When one reads such statements, it would seem that De Vera is a valiant advocate of human rights. I am just wondering, where he was when armed police officers and soldiers swarmed to the residence of then President Joseph Ejercito Estrada to arrest him? Where was he when the President was being publicly humiliated and embarrassed on national television? Was not his decency shocked by the manner with which the warrant was served? I guess Jake Macasaet of Malaya summed it up for us, "Some crusader, this De Vera."

—TEOFILO VIVENCIO, 11 Viola St., Halo-halo, San Juan, Metro Manila

China study stirs debate over rich-poor divide

FEATURE

Jonathan Ansfield

BEIJING—In 1925, when Mao Zedong went door-to-door surveying the rural classes of his native Hunan province, his Communists were but a fractious, fledgling party with a tenuous revolutionary base of urban workers. Then the farmer's son plugged into the power of China's peasantry, sketching scenes of downtrodden farmers, decadent warlords and all the makings of mutiny in the gulf between them.

Decades on, outgoing party chief Jiang Zemin faces his own divisive bid to extend the Communist horizon—to capitalistic entrepreneurs. And he has a point, at least according to fresh class surveys from China's top government think tank.

But the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) report has prompted a cranky backlash from retired hard-line apparatchiks who bemoan the rise of China's private classes and the demise of workers and farmers who form its socialist backbone. In turn, academic sources say, the CASS account of harrowing social chasms has left reformist top brass feeling exposed.

CASS became a scapegoat for an Old Guard grumbling over statistics that stacked workers and farmers eighth and ninth out of a list of 10 social strata—the 10th being unemployed. More important, the report fanned the flames of a party struggle over what China needs first—social equality or economic expansion.

"Our viewpoint, in fact, is to balance the two," explained a CASS academic close to the 400-page report, which was published as a book.

Yet as a pivotal year in Chinese politics dawns with a session of parliament, CASS' fast-selling report was not expected to help anyone's cause, Jiang's included.

"The two sides feel that by raising these problems, we have exacerbated their differences," said the academic, who asked not to be identified.

After its December release, several major newspapers even suggested—incorrectly—the report had the party's official stamp of approval.

With discord a party taboo and unity a mantra as Communist China aims for its first ever leadership change without a coup or purge, the timing could not be worse. "They don't want contention in the ranks. They want to table it for later," the academic said.

Jiang, due to leave his party post later this year, will leave a bourgeois legacy marked by China's WTO entry, the 2008 Olympic bid and a nascent middle class. But heady growth cost millions their jobs at state-owned firms and produced rural fat cats living in part off farmers' taxes.

Hence CASS' call for more even development holds few surprises.

The book also is not much of a page-turner. At one bookstand for legislators at a Beijing hotel this week, two delegates were seen spurning CASS in favor of "Body-Art-Nature," a glossy volume of female nudes nestled among trees and rocks.

Yet the study, already on its third print run, bares all in its own right. "It seems very much to be in the new tradition of rather more frank assessments of China's social development," said one Western diplomat.

The sensitivity around the report reflects how Communist ideological debates weigh on government policymaking with greater urgency as market reforms zoom China down an ever more capitalist road—or a highway to hell in the Communist tradition.

CASS, led by Politburo member Li Tieying, plunged into the report in the wake of Jiang's 1998 Three Represents doctrine, part of which says the party represents a broader swath of society than originally interpreted.

After Jiang controversially invited private businessman last July to join the party that had long vilified them, "relevant sides" required CASS to publish early results, says the report.

Analysts say Jiang will seek to enshrine his July message into the party constitution at its congress later this year, before he and other top leaders hand over the mantle.

As one example where Jiang's invitation gets a nod, in the study of Anhui province's blue-collar capital of Hefei, 70 percent of respondents said private businessmen deserved political privileges on a par with state firm executives, most of whom are party members.

To the old Maoist hard-liners, the study speaks a strange new language. Its analysis eschews "class struggle," which pits the haves against the have-nots. Gone too is the politically charged Chinese term for social "classes," replaced by "strata."

"A lot of old cadres have called us. They have also expressed their opinions to top leaders," said the CASS academic. "They're speaking on behalf of the workers and farmers."

"It all boils down to the question of exploitation," said the diplomat, describing what is at stake for party ideologues.

CASS' aim, said the academic, was to tell it like it is. "Development has proceeded forward but party ideology lags behind. It has become an obstacle."

In a country where inequities echo Mao's early days and climax in violent protests by over-taxed farmers and underpaid workers, few current leaders would object to the study's attempt to defuse revolutionary thinking, the academic said.

"Otherwise, you would always be pondering over who are your friends and allies and who your enemies."

Analysts say they expect more social reform at a snail's pace over the next couple of years as the new generation of leaders tests the waters.

But once they get their feet wet, bridging China's regional and class abyss will take top priority, according to Cheng Li, an expert on Chinese politics at Hamilton College in New York.

"They have to do so," he said. "So I think the study...will make the leaders pay attention."

If anything, the CASS study has stirred up popular sentiment over the depths of the rich-poor divide, said the academic. "If there wasn't this feeling, then why is everybody talking about the results of a book?"

Reuters

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Israel pulls out troops from Ramallah

ARAFAT

RAMALLAH, West Bank—Israel withdrew its troops from Ramallah on Friday, ending a brief reoccupation of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's West Bank base as a US mediator geared up to give peace another chance.

A Reuters correspondent saw dozens of tanks leaving Ramallah in an early morning operation. The Israeli Army said its forces also quit their positions in two other West Bank cities.

"In accordance with a government directive, Israeli military forces completed their pullout from the centers of the cities of Ramallah, Qalqilya and Tulkarm in Palestinian Authority territory," an Army statement said.

"The forces are deployed in a cordon around the cities."

Arafat, confined to his headquarters in Ramallah by the Israeli military for three months, called the order a trick.

A military source said the army still held positions in Palestinian territory on the outskirts of the West Bank cities of Bethlehem, Nablus, Jenin and Hebron.

The army entered Ramallah, the Palestinians' commercial and political hub in the West Bank, on Tuesday in what it said was part of a general sweep against militants who have killed scores of Israelis during a 17-month-old uprising.

US peace envoy Anthony Zinni on Thursday began his third trip to the region since November to seek implementation of a US-brokered ceasefire and truce-to-talks plan drawn up by an international committee under ex-US senator George Mitchell.

Sharon hosted Zinni in Jerusalem, and told reporters: "The main effort now is to achieve a ceasefire, and I hope that with combined effort we will manage to achieve this."

But Arafat, in an interview with Reuters, questioned Sharon's sincerity. "He accepted it (the Mitchell plan) officially but on the other side of his thoughts and imagination he wanted to continue his military plans," Arafat said.

Israel and the United States have said Arafat must do more to rein in militants and halt attacks on Israelis. Just prior to the invasion of Ramallah, Sharon called off tanks that had kept the Palestinian leader at his headquarters there since a wave of suicide bombings in December.

Arafat said the United States should put more pressure on Israel to help Zinni secure a ceasefire during his trip. Arafat was to meet Zinni in Ramallah on Friday evening. ***Reuters***

Bush boosts development aid by $5B

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Thursday unveiled plans to boost US development aid by $5 billion over three years for poor nations that take the "hard road" to legal, economic and political reform.

"Greater contributions from developed nations must be linked to greater responsibility from developing nations. The United States will lead by example," Bush said at the Inter-American Development Bank's headquarters here.

Starting in 2004, the monies will go into a "Millennium Challenge Account" to fund projects including the fight against HIV/AIDS; trade promotion; textbooks and training to students in Islamic nations; and help to increase harvests in the poorest nations, he said in a speech.

But "to make progress we must encourage nations and leaders to walk the hard road of political, legal and economic reform so all their people can benefit," said Bush, who heads next week to an international meeting on development aid that is expected to gather 50 world leaders in Monterrey, Mexico.

The fund will pay out only to nations that battle corruption; uphold human rights; adhere to the rule of law; invest in schools and health care; and pursue open markets, "sustainable" budgets, and promote entrepreneurialism.

Bush said he had directed US Secretary of State Colin Powell and Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill "to reach out to the world community, to develop a set of clear and concrete and objective criteria for measuring progress."

The US leader explained that pursuing "sound policies" could help treble the impact of the economic aid, because under those circumstances each dollar of assistance attracts two dollars of private investment.

"And when development aid rewards reform and responsibility, it lifts almost four times as many people out of poverty compared to the old approach of writing checks without regard to results," he said.

Ultimately, nations that meet Washington's criteria for receiving the assistance "will really no longer need it" because they will earn more trade revenues and attract more foreign investment, the president said. ***AFP***

Hindu priest says he won't defy ruling

AYODHYA, India—A priest who threatened to defy the Supreme Court and armed police to hold a Hindu ceremony near a destroyed mosque changed his mind Friday, apparently defusing a crisis that pitted security troops against Hindu fundamentalists linked with the national government.

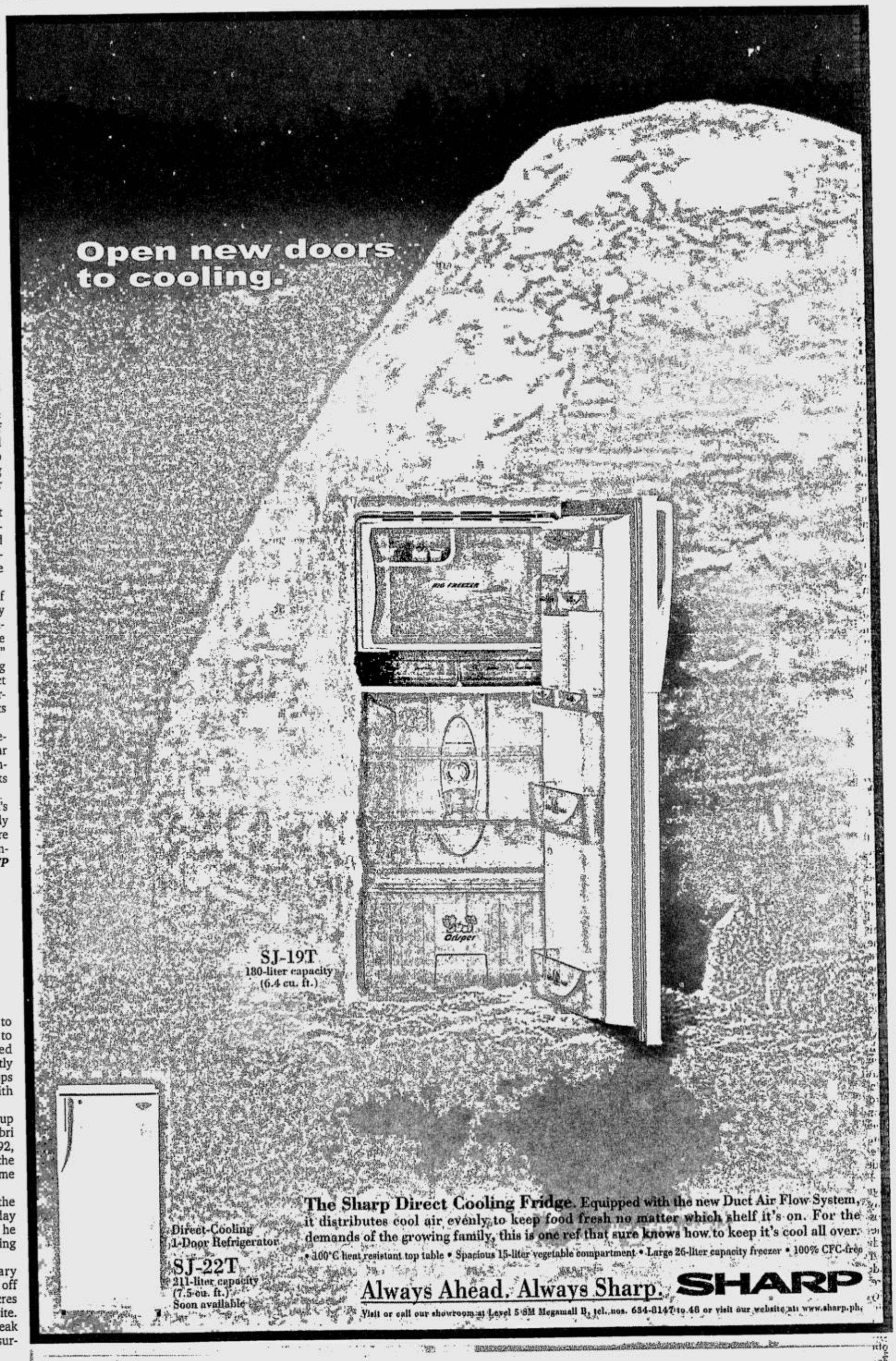
Ramchandra Das, who heads a trust set up to build a Hindu temple on ruins of the Babri mosque that a Hindu mob destroyed in 1992, said Friday he would dedicate a pillar for the temple outside the area where the Supreme Court had banned any religious activity.

The police commissioner in charge of the area, Anil Kumar Gupta, had said Thursday that as the receiver, or government agent, he would be willing to accept the pillar, setting up the compromise.

Thousands of police and paramilitary troops, most of them Hindus, had sealed off Ayodhya to stop the ceremony in the 67 acres of government land around the disputed site. They arrested 175 activists who tried to sneak in overnight across the Saryu River that surrounded the town of 14,000.

Police in surrounding cities also made hundreds of preventive arrests of members of the World Hindu Council, who have spearheaded the building of the temple to Rama, the chief Hindu deity, on the rubble of the 16th century mosque.

The town appeared deserted, with doors and windows bolted and all shops closed Friday morning, but people inside could be heard chanting, "Hare Rama." ***AP***



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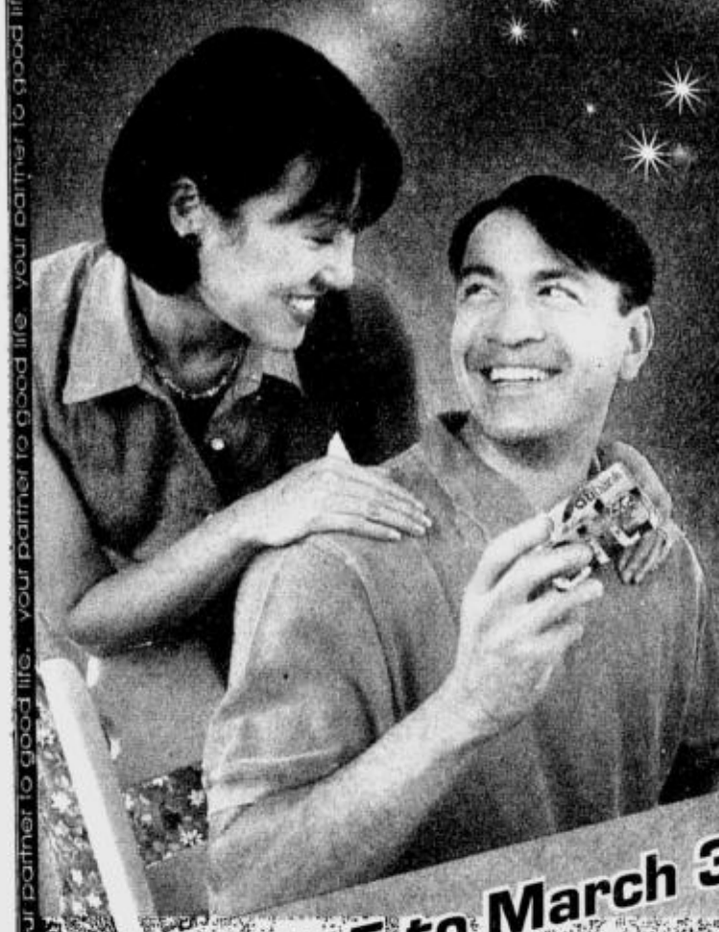

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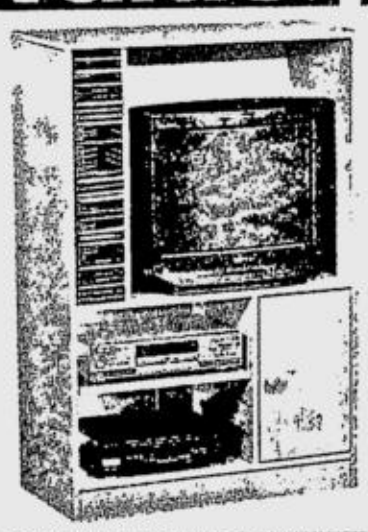

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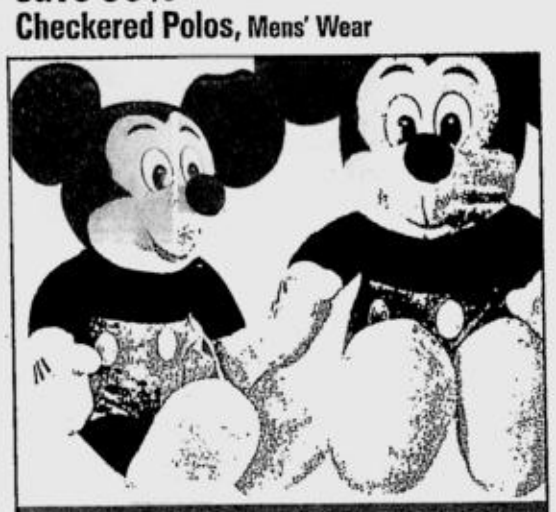

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God knows why US bombed friendly hamlet, says victim

By Charles J. Hanley

CHOKER KARAIZ, Afghanistan—The stricken old man could barely walk through the rubble of his village. The vision of the torn bodies of women and children was still too real in his mind's eye.

"Every time I walk through here, I see the scene all over again," Mohammad Qasin said Thursday.

Villagers say 52 people, mostly women and children, were killed in the bombing and strafing four months ago that obliterated this isolated hamlet, a few houses ringed by irrigated wheat fields among miles of semi-desert emptiness in southern Afghanistan.

Now the case of Choker Karaiz is one of dozens of US air attacks for which survivors have filed claims for compensation.

"We don't know. God knows," survivor Aziz Ahmed said Thursday when asked why US pilots might have attacked this tiny, mud-walled place one night in late October.

The government of Kandahar province alone has filed more than 70 compensation cases involving US air attacks with the central government in Kabul, provincial spokesperson Yusuf Pashtun said Wednesday.

"Hamid Karzai said send them to the Ministry of the Interior," Pashtun said, referring to Afghanistan's interim national leader.

Pashtun said four cases involved multiple deaths in Kandahar villages, with the biggest being Choker Karaiz, 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of Kandahar City. The rest were cases of single deaths or limited damage here and there in the province, he said. Others, "hard to prove," were not forwarded to Kabul, he said.

The provincial spokesperson said he had no information on how the compensation process will work. It could not be learned immediately whether the US government would consider such claims, or whether they would be handled exclusively by the Afghan government or by a joint commission.

Maj. Brad Lowell, a spokesman for US Central Command, said Thursday he was unaware of any process for Afghans to make claims against the US military.

The Pentagon has said civilians were never deliberately targeted during the bombing in Afghanistan but has acknowledged that some bombs went astray.

Last month, however, the Pentagon acknowledged that US Army forces killed 14 or more Afghans who were neither al-Qaida nor Taliban members during a raid in Uruzgan province in January.

Provincial Gov. Jan Mohammed delivered $1,000 to $2,000 to each dead man's family, as well as a verbal apology relayed on behalf of high-ranking US officials he declined to identify.

The Taliban took a group of foreign reporters to the village in November and claimed 92 people died there. Reporters at the time counted about 15 graves.

The Choker Karaiz raid is not among the incidents the US military is investigating as possibly involving the killing of civilians, US Central Command spokesperson Lt. Col. Martin Compton said Thursday.

Peter Bouckaert, a researcher with the New York-based Human Rights Watch, independently interviewed people in Choker Karaiz in an effort to establish a civilian casualty toll. ***AP***

INTREPID WASP KILLER REUTERS

Wasps swarm around New Zealand pest controller Mike Knight as he dangles from a helicopter by a rope while spraying insecticide in the hope of eradicating a wasp's nest the size of a large van about 25 meters up a 100-year-old Puriri tree in Pawarenga on March 14.

Al-Qaida may make SE Asia its new base, says FBI head

SINGAPORE—Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network has lost its "sanctuary" in Afghanistan and may look to Southeast Asia or the Middle East to relocate its terror headquarters, the head of the FBI said Friday.

Too much is unknown about terrorist networks in Southeast Asia and more intelligence gathering is needed in the region, FBI Director Robert Mueller said in Singapore.

"What we do not know is the extent of the support in Southeast Asia," he said. "We don't know all we would like to know about their means of communications. We do not know all we would like to know about the financial transfers, the money sources."

Dozens of suspected militants have been arrested in Southeast Asia for allegedly planning a series of attacks. Officials say the men belong to a radical Muslim group called Jemaah Islamiyah, which Singapore says planned to blow up the US Embassy.

Mueller, who was speaking to the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore during a tour of the region, lauded Singapore for foiling an alleged attack against Americans and for detaining 13 suspects. When asked if the FBI, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, had been interrogating suspected militants in the region, Mueller said: "I can't tell you."

Mueller also praised the efforts of law enforcement officials in Malaysia and the southern Philippines in the war on terror. He said Indonesia was cooperating in the war and that it would be counterproductive to criticize the country for lagging behind. ***AP***

US indicts accused Pearl kidnapper

WASHINGTON—The British-born Islamic militant blamed for the kidnap and murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl was indicted Thursday by the United States, which demanded Pakistan to turn him over to US authorities for judgment.

With his public announcement of the indictment, US Attorney General John Ashcroft made clear the need for Pakistan to cooperate with the eventual extradition of Ahmed Omar Saeed Sheikh, known as Sheikh Omar, who holds both British and Pakistani passports.

"We are collaborating with the Pakistanis and informing them of our interest, and we expect them to be cooperative," Ashcroft told reporters in announcing the charges of "kidnapping and murder" for which Omar, 29, could receive the death penalty.

"Obviously, they have him in custody now, and we don't. And we are signaling our clear interest in trying him on these charges and bringing him to justice in the United States," not only for Pearl's kidnap but also the 1994 kidnap of a US citizen in India, Ashcroft said.

Bela Jay Nuss, was kidnapped at gunpoint in India in 1994, but was freed without incident. ***AFP***

Cuba plane crash kills 17 people

HAVANA—A small Cuban plane crashed Thursday in unexplained circumstances, killing 17 people, including Canadian, British and German tourists, Cuban authorities said.

The plane, belonging to state airline Aerotaxi, went down during the afternoon on an air route between the southern coastal town of Cienfuegos and the northern resort island of Cayo Coco, aviation sources said.

A Foreign Ministry official said that according to preliminary information, six Canadians, five Britons, four Cubans and two Germans had died in the crash.

An official at Cuba's Civil Aviation Institute confirmed the crash, although he put the number at "about 14 or 15 people on board" including three crew members and the passengers.

"There was an accident at 4.30 p.m. . . We still have no news of any survivors," the official, who asked not to be named, said by telephone.

None of the sources could explain why the plane crashed. ***Reuters***

Grand jury charges Andersen for shredding Enron documents

WASHINGTON—A federal grand jury has indicted accounting firm Andersen for obstruction of justice tied to probes of Enron Corp.'s collapse, federal officials announced on Thursday, prompting Andersen to say its business was damaged but it had no plans for bankruptcy.

The US justice department said Andersen was indicted in connection with the destruction of tons of documents and computer files sought in probes of fallen energy trading giant Enron, the center of a storm of controversy since it filed the largest bankruptcy in US history on Dec. 2.

Deputy Attorney General Larry Thompson said the indictment included allegations of widespread criminal conduct by Andersen, charging the firm sought to undermine the justice system by destroying evidence relevant to investigators.

"Dozens of large trunks were brought in to haul documents from Andersen's office and Enron's building to Andersen's firm office in Houston in order to destroy literally tons of documents," Thompson told a news conference.

The indictment alleged that Andersen partners and others, at urgent and mandatory meetings, told employees to immediately destroy documents on Enron, a top campaign contributor to President George W. Bush and others in Washington.

Chicago-based Andersen, which had been Enron's auditor until January, blasted the prosecution of the firm by the government as "a gross abuse of government power."

Confirming business damage from client defections, Andersen spokesperson Charlie Leonard said that, as of Wednesday, the firm had lost about two percent of its annual US revenues. "I would be the first to acknowledge that we're looking at a significant hit," Leonard said on a conference call.

But, he added, "There is no plan for bankruptcy . . . We're affirmatively moving forward with our business in the US."

Sources close to the firm said Andersen lawyers would likely move quickly to fight the government prosecution, possibly moving for a rapid dismissal of the charge.

Andersen rivals Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu and Ernst & Young on Wednesday ended merger talks with Andersen, citing its legal troubles. "I can't believe another firm would be interested in them at this point," Paul Brown, chair of accounting at New York University's Stern School of Business, said.

The justice department alleged that Andersen partners began a plan for the wholesale destruction of documents just days after Enron alerted the auditor on Oct. 19 that the US Securities and Exchange Commission had begun an inquiry into special partnerships created by the energy firm.

On Oct. 16, Enron had reported its first quarterly loss in more than four years and took $1 billion in charges on the poorly performing partnerships.

"Employees were told to work overtime if necessary to finish the job of destroying documents. The shredder at the Andersen office and Enron building ran virtually

SUPPORTERS of Zimbabwe's ruling ZANU-PF party celebrate victory after Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe was officially declared reelected as Zimbabwe's president in central Harare March 14. REUTERS

Appeals court upholds Lockerbie conviction

LONDON—Former Libyan agent Abdel Basset al-Megrahi began life in a Scottish jail on Friday after a special court refused to overturn his conviction for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over the town of Lockerbie.

A special court sitting in the Netherlands but under Scottish laws sentenced Megrahi to life in January 2001 for blowing up the New York-bound airliner, killing 259 mostly American passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground.

He was flown by helicopter from the court, at a converted former US airbase at Camp Zeist in the Netherlands, to a Glasgow jail.

Megrahi, 49, started his prison term of at least 20 years in the city's tough Barlinnie Prison, where ex-inmates say a special cell dubbed "Gaddafi's cafe" awaits.

It will be a significant change for a man who has spent three years in the purpose built prison in Camp Zeist. For the past year, since the acquittal of his co-accused Al-Amin Khalifa Fahima, he has been the sole prisoner.

Barlinnie, Scotland's toughest jail, is known for a strict, no nonsense regime.

Built in 1880 to house prisoners mostly serving up to four years behind bars, Barlinnie has suffered from persistent overcrowding and a depressing reputation.

An official report in 1997 described the jail as a "national disgrace." A return visit two years later praised efforts to improve conditions but said it still had some way to go.

"Dickensian conditions such as these have no place in a modern penal system," one Scottish parliamentarian commented on the prison inspector's 1997 report.

"We cannot detain people in overcrowded, spartan conditions with little to distract them and then turn round and complain when there is a problem," she added.

Between 1996 and 1998 at least eight inmates committed suicide at Barlinnie, which houses one-fifth of Scotland's prison population.

Megrahi will be monitored by an independent body—probably the United Nations—during his incarceration. He will have access to an interpreter and be isolated from other prisoners.

He will otherwise be treated like any other inmate.

A spokesperson for the Scottish Prison Service said Megrahi would be required to work five days a week, have a television in his cell and be allowed to buy books and newspapers.

After having a gym for his personal use and reportedly a personal cook in Camp Zeist, al-Megrahi is likely to get just one hour a day for exercise and eat the same prison food as everyone else.

His wife, who lives in Libya, will be allowed to visit for at least 30 minutes a week. He will not be eligible for parole until at least 2019. ***Reuters***

Commonwealth urged to suspend Zimbabwe

CANBERRA—New Zealand Prime Minister Helen Clark said on Friday Zimbabwe should be suspended from the Commonwealth and urged Australia not to bow to pressure from African countries to overlook election abuses.

"I think there is only one credible decision that can be taken . . . I think the Commonwealth should suspend Zimbabwe," Clark told Australian Broadcasting Corp radio.

Clark said a scathing report by the observers' group of the 54-nation Commonwealth, which said the re-election of President Robert Mugabe did not reflect the will of the people, should convince the group's three-nation Zimbabwe taskforce to act.

The three nations are Australia, South Africa and Nigeria.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard said he would chair a taskforce meeting in London on Tuesday but he refused to be drawn on what opinion he will offer.

But while Commonwealth members Britain, Canada and New Zealand have rejected Mugabe's re-election, some African states have endorsed his re-election.

Nigerian observers have said they saw nothing that threatened the integrity of the poll. South African observers said the election was "legitimate" despite a campaign marred by "incidents of violence and intimidation."

Howard said he would reserve any public judgment until he met South African President Thabo Mbeki and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo.

"The report that I've read is critical, very critical of the process," Howard said in a radio interview in Sydney. ***Reuters***

Across the NATION

Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

Critics say dam could end up like nuke plant

DAGUPAN CITY—The $1.2-billion San Roque multipurpose dam project (SRMDP) in San Manuel town is almost complete but those opposing the project are optimistic that it can be stopped in the same way that the Bataan nuclear power plant was mothballed.

Around 400 residents of affected towns in Benguet and Pangasinan staged a rally here on Thursday to mark the International Day of Action Against Dams.

They called for a stop to the construction of the San Roque dam, the Pampanga Delta development project and other dams built in the country.

"Let the Agno River flow. Stop the construction of the San Roque multipurpose dam project and other large dams in the country. We oppose any foreign domination in the Philippines," the ralliers said.

In a statement, the Anakbayan said the dams in the country are killing farmers and citizens.

"Thousands of families are now facing serious detrimental socio-economic and environmental concerns (and) mostly suffer from massive dislocation from their homes and rice lands," the statement said.

"These dams have proven to serve the interest of a few administrators and foreign capitalists at the expense of the lives, livelihood and legitimate right of the vast majority that it affects," the Anakbayan said.

Roman Polintan of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said the rally was held in Dagupan City to call the attention of Pangasinenses about the effects of the dam on the province.

"More than other places, it is Pangasinan which is most affected by the dam, specifically by massive flooding that it may cause especially since it is very near the Digdig fault," he said.

"We must stop the construction of the dams. Developed countries have stopped building dams because they are outdated technologies. Like the Bataan nuclear plant, we must stop the San Roque Dam to avert disasters in the future," Polintan said.

Despite its near-completion, the campaign to stop the construction of the SRMDP is gaining ground.

More than 700 displaced families still have to receive their compensation until today, the Cordillera People's Alliance said.

The protesters claimed that only the San Roque Power Corp. (SRPC) and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) would profit from the project.

However, the JBIC has reportedly refused to grant the P8-bilion loan to the Philippine government for the dam's irrigation component because of protests from the affected residents.

The protesters also brought attention to the quarrying activities in the construction site, which they said disregarded farmers tilling and nurturing the lands.

Under the build-operate-transfer scheme, the government, through the National Power Corp., must comply with the power purchase agreement signed with the SRPC, which provides that the Napocor pay a fixed monthly capacity fee of $8.95 million.

Also, the power purchase agreement guarantees that the SRPC will build and operate the SRMDP for 25 years. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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	11:00 - 12:00 NN	Benesco Construction Supply	Ariete 25 System Office & Fitting
	1:00 - 2:00 PM	Copylandia	
	2:00 - 3:00 PM	Union Cement	Mix and Fix
	3:00 - 4:00 PM	Orion Industries	Hot & Cold Water Pipe
	4:00 - 5:00 PM	HCG North America	
17 March 2002	10:00 - 11:00 AM	Atlanta Industries, Inc.	Atlanta's Unending Innovations
	1:00 - 2:00 PM	HCG North America	
	2:00 - 3:00 PM	Hunter Douglas Phils. Inc.	Hunter Douglas Window Fashions

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Mindanao will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi33° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 24° Lo 15°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 20°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 21°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/16/02

GMA offers idle PNR lands to poor

By Romulo O. Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SAN PABLO CITY—Unfazed by a lightning protest rally staged by militant groups, President Macapagal-Arroyo endorsed the economic development plans of this city and Laguna province and offered idle Philippine National Railways lands to rural and urban squatters here.

Macapagal-Arroyo told thousands of Lagunenses led by local officials that the San Pablo City Development Plan earlier presented to her is perfectly in tune with the national goals of economic development and poverty alleviation of the rural and urban poor.

About 50 members of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in Southern Tagalog, Kilusang Mayo Uno and Anak-Bayan staged a lightning rally just as Ms Macapagal was about to deliver her speech here Thursday morning.

About 12 to 15 of them had formed a human chain then shouted slogans like: "Gloria, *pasista* (fascist)," "Gloria *hirap sa bayan* (people's scourge)" "Gloria, *ibagsak*! (Down with Gloria)."

The Presidential Security Group and the local police immediately dispersed the ralliers.

Ka Edwin, one of the leaders of Bayan-ST, said some of their demands from the Macapagal administration were: the stop to militarization in Southern Tagalog; increase in the basic pay of workers; more jobs; and pull out of US troops from Mindanao.

The apparently shocked President candidly returned the favor to the angry protesters by saying: "*Maraming salamat po* (Thank you)."

She particularly approved the plan of the city to promote eco-tourism in the Seven Lakes.

Macapagal-Arroyo promised that the coconut farmers in San Pablo City and throughout the country will finally benefit from the coconut levy fund.

Ms Macapagal underscored the need to develop the two existing economic resources for the country's development today to win the battle against poverty. These are in the areas of "beach tourism" and "eco-tourism."

Macapagal also commended the city government led by Mayor Florante Aquino for initiating the establishment of a new college devoted to agriculture—the Dalubhasaan ng Lungsod ng San Pablo.

She also commended the people of San Pablo and the Church for being vigilant in fighting against corruption.

En route to the San Pablo City Lions Club House located at the Doña Evangelina Macapagal Ave. where the President delivered her speech, she conducted a windshield inspection of the Sampaloc Lake.

ROUNDUP

3 men killed in ambush

DAVAO CITY—Three men were killed when they were ambushed by six suspected bandits in Hagonoy, Davao del Sur, on Wednesday. Orlando Nerosa, 47; Rolando Bacus, 41; and his son Ronel, 20, were on their way home after a drinking session at around 7 p.m., when the suspects, armed with M14 and M16 rifles fired on them. Orlito, a brother of Nerosa said he could have been one of the victims, had he not decided to go home later. Responding policemen later arrived, but the suspects have already gone.

Anthony S. Allad, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Accreditation revoked

BAGUIO CITY—The office of the Ombudsman has revoked the accreditation of a Baguio-based nongovernment group as a corruption prevention unit due to alleged violation of basic rules and regulations. Deputy Ombudsman Margarito Gervacio Jr. told Frederick Farres, Linis Gobyerno executive director, that his group had violated the manual operations and accreditation guidelines of the Ombudsman. He said while the office of the Ombudsman welcomed help from NGOs in its anti-corruption drive, it could not continue to accredit shady groups.

PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Settlement claims paid

SAN FERNANDO CITY—A check for P375,000 was turned over on Wednesday to the operator of a bus that figured in the Feb. 2 accident where 16 people died in Bokod, Benguet. The amount represented the first tranch of the P1.25-million settlement claims given by the Makati-based Philippine Accident Managers Inc., a consortium of 23 insurance companies, to the Norton Bus. Aside from the 16 fatalities, 39 others were hurt when the bus plunged into a ravine.

Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Student dies in mishap

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—An 18-year-old student of Palawan State University yesterday died when a motorcycle he was riding rammed into a Mazda pick-up truck along the national highway. Madmande Ibno was declared dead-on-the-spot by responding members of the Quick Reaction Team. His companion, Lourdes Badinas, 42, suffered minor injuries but a third back rider, a 2-year-old child, was not hurt.

Geraldford P. Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Daet leaders launch group

PROMINENT personalities who trace their roots to Daet and neighboring towns in Camarines Norte launched recently the Metro Daet Development Foundation (MDDF) at a meeting in Mandaluyong City, a news release said. The MDDF aims to help develop Daet, Labo, Basud, Mercedes, Paracale, and Jose Ma. Panganiban, among others. The foundation will undertake programs directed at harnessing the human, material and natural resources of Daet. Former Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato was elected chair of the Foundation.

HOUSING PROTEST TOOTS SOBERANO

A boy plays as his protesting parent joins the National Housing Authority employees in Baguio stage a noise barrage last Wednesday demanding a halt to the creation of the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Butuan radio station gets extended relief from court

BUTUAN CITY--The Regional Trial Court Branch 2 here ordered Mayor Daisy Plaza and the city government to cease from closing Bombo Radyo.

In a seven-page decision, Presiding Judge Rosarito Dabalos said closing down Bombo without due process was an act to "curtail the constitutional right of the Freedom of Speech."

Unfazed by the injunction, Plaza's camp instead threatened to file administrative charges against Dabalos, the second judge to restrain the closure order against Bombo.

Plaza had repeatedly vowed to shut down the radio station, which has been critical of her administration, for alleged violation of local laws.

But her earlier attempts were prevented after RTC executive judge Victor Tomaneng issued a 20-day temporary restraining order.

Plaza questioned Tomaneng's TRO and went on to accuse the judge of having been bribed.

Lawyer Noel Libres, vice president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Butuan Chapter said Plaza should be cited for indirect contempt as her charges did not only cast doubt on Tomaneng but on the entire judicial system as well.

The row between Plaza and Bombo has become the subject of a recent Senate investigation.

Last Wednesday, the executive told members of the Senate Committee on Public Information and Media Affairs, chaired by Sen. Tito Sotto, that she has ordered the closure of Bombo radio-Butuan because it had violated provisions of the mayor's permit.

Among these are the non-compliance of the Environment Compliance Certificate (ECC) provisions, violations of zoning ordinance and the non-renewal of its Temporary Use Permit (TUP).

Plaza also accused Bombo and its station manager, Norberto Pagaspas, of committing seditious acts by "inciting people to rebellion" by staging pro-press freedom rallies recently.

"They had been giving chaos to our city government, incited rebellion and not paying taxes to our city," Plaza said during the investigation, which was aired live over 43 Bombo radio stations nationwide.

Pagaspas denied Plaza's rebellion charges, saying he only called public attention on Plaza's alleged malversation of public funds and massive corruption activities.

Pagaspas said the mayor's act was an effort to stifle media freedom "in the guise of administrative matters."

But, Sen. Edgardo Angara, himself an ally of Plaza (LDP) said the "heart of the controversy" lies in how local ordinances and environmental ordinances interfere with press freedom.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said he found it strange that "unseen hands" were orchestrating the closure of Bombo radio stations nationwide. ***Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

DoJ recommends murder case vs ex-congressman

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—-The Department of Justice has recommended the filing of an attempted murder case against a former representative and four others, including a policeman, who were implicated in an election day shooting incident last year in a village of an island town of Samar.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zonio recommended that former Rep. Catalino Figueroa of the second district of Samar, SPO1 Diosdado Gabuay, Jovencio Matarom, Romeo Bito and Julio Pabilane be charged of attempted murder aggravated by the use of unlicensed firearms in a 15-page resolution he signed on Feb. 15.

Zonio also recommended that a separate information be filed against Figueroa for alleged violation of the Commission on Elections gun ban.

The case stemmed from a shooting incident on May 14, 2001 at Barangay Tinaugan in the island-town of Zumarraga, Samar allegedly perpetrated by a group led by the former representative against the supporters of the political opponent of his wife. The incident resulted in the injury of complainant Samuel Lim.

Lim is a relative of then Zumarraga reelectionist Mayor Cresilda C. Lim who was being challenged by Nelipta Figueroa, wife of the ex-representative. Ms Figueroa won the election and now sits as the island town's chief executive.

The former representative and his other co-accused could not immediately be reached for comments yesterday.

Lawyer Jose Mendiola, one of the counsels for the prosecution, yesterday told the INQUIRER that a DoJ representative in coordination with the provincial prosecution office will file the case against Figueroa and his co-accused at the regional trial court in Catbalogan, 107 kilometers north of Tacloban City.

But as of yesterday morning, the DoJ representative has yet to arrive in Catbalogan for the filing of the case.

Mendiola said that he himself has not yet received his copy of the DoJ resolution, but he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that his client has already informed him by phone from Manila about this resolution.

The INQUIRER obtained a copy of the resolution on Thursday.

Mendiola disclosed that they filed the case at the provincial prosecutor's office that handled the initial proceedings particularly the submission of affidavits and counter-affidavits of the contending parties.

He said they later requested that the preliminary investigation of the case be handled by the Department of Justice, particularly in the investigation of the witnesses, "for security reasons."

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Communist rebels accuse military of spreading fake press releases

BAGUIO CITY—The New People's Army rebels operating in Ilocos and Cordillera have accused the Armed Forces of the Philippines of distributing fake press statements attributed to the NPA.

Diego Wadagan, spokesperson of the Agustin Begnalen Command, said one of these "fake releases" was that purportedly coming from a Ka Sugpon of the Leonardo Pacsi Command (LPC) regarding the targeting for liquidation of five Abra mayors.

The statement which came out in some newspapers said Mayors Mailed Molina of Bucloc town, Elizalde Pacsa of San Isidro town, Mark Ysrael Bernos of La Paz town, Cecille Luna of Lagayan town and Medel Averner of San Juan town were up for liquidation by the Pacsi command.

"The statement is false and did not come from the NPA," Wadagan wrote in Iloko. "The NPA command covering Abra is the Agustin Begnalen command, not the Leonardo Pacsi Command which covers Mt. Province."

Wadagan said of the five mayors, only Molina is the enemy of the NPA.

"Only Mailed Molina has incurred blood debts to the revolutionary movement and the people, and thus deserves to be punished for his and the CPLA's grave crimes such as treason against the revolutionary movement, the murder of a number of civilians and Red fighters, landgrabbing, and others," he said.

Molina is said to be the chair of the faction of Cordillera People's Liberation Army.

"The purpose of the fake LPC statement is counter revolutionary. Such dirty tactics can only come from none other than the psywar department of the AFP. As in the past, they used deception and violence to discredit the revolution," Wadagan said.

The Chadli Molintas Command, the regional operational command of the NPA, has disowned the killing of Mayor Jose Segundo of Tubo, Abra, on Dec. 27 last year.

"The recent spate of bogus statements purportedly issued by the NPA is part of the 503rd brigade's political preparation for a renewed military campaign in the Ilocos and Cordillera regions," Wadagan said. ***Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

BEST FLOAT
The Baguio Country Club float complete with a flowing fountain won for the second consecutive year the best float award in the recently concluded Panagbenga 2002 Flower Festival in Baguio City. Panagbenga means flowers in bloom.

INQUIRER Visayas
Editor Jun Bandayrel • Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Group gathers 'leftists, rightists'

Bosom FRIENDS give comfort to survivors of breast cancer

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

SOME of us are leftists, others are rightists. I'm a rightist," said Maggie Hofileña, a pastor of the Emmanuel Christian Fellowship.

Hofileña, 60, was not revealing her political make but her loss and those of her friends at Bosom FRIENDS, a private support group for breast cancer survivors in Panay and Guimaras.

The group is composed of a dozen women diagnosed as having breast cancer to laugh and cry together, as well as live out the meaning of the acronym FRIENDS—fellowship, restoration, intimacy, encouragement, concern for needs and spirituality.

The Bosom FRIENDS is the first support group for breast cancer survivors on the islands of Panay and Guimaras. It was established by Hofileña, who found strength and courage to help survivors like herself.

Breast cancer survivors from Bosom FRIENDS (L-R) Chita Naciongayao, Dr. Patria Inayon, Liceria Espadera, Josephine Fernandez, Maggie Hofileña and Ofelia Fernandez (partly hidden)
PHOTO FROM BOSOM FRIENDS

On her 38th wedding anniversary on June 9, 2000, Hofileña, then 58, underwent a mammography after she felt pin pricks in her right breast. When she learned that she had cancer, she went through an emotional roller coaster—getting angry, blaming others, bargaining with God and dying a little, but finally accepting her illness and making peace with herself.

Twenty days later, she went through a modified radical mastectomy to remove a fast-growing tumor clinically described as "infiltrating ductile carcinoma."

Earlier, she had asked her surgeon if it was possible to save her right breast. But when the tumor was found to be spreading to the surrounding fatty tissues, the doctor did what he had to do—remove the breast, a valued part of a woman and symbol of femininity and sexuality.

For a month, she had six courses of chemotherapy and had to contend with nausea, dizziness, headache, loss of appetite and the dreaded hair loss.

Toward the end of December, when she overcame her general bouts of weakness, Hofileña started regaining her bearing. She started dreaming of how to seek out other women who have survived breast cancer and gather them to share their stories and how they have been coping.

Birth of support group

On Feb. 17, 2001, Hofileña celebrated her birthday by gathering seven survivors to organize the Bosom FRIENDS. She envisioned the group to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of survivors, as well as help in cancer information and educational activities.

Other founding members of the group are Marlene Tungala, Nenette Ynion, Ofelia Fernandez, Liceria Espadera, Chita Naciongayo, Cecilia Somes, Helena Aleligay, Josephine Fernandez, Thelma Gicana, Patria Inayan and Regina Agnes Patiño.

The members promised to give each other the support necessary for their healing and as they make major life changes after undergoing mastectomy, like leaving a stressful job.

"We discuss what we went through. Sometimes, we show each other our scars. We cheer each other up, pray together and raise funds for members or women who do not have the means to get medical treatment," said Hofileña.

In October last year, the support group celebrated its first Breast Cancer Awareness Month in Iloilo City by organizing a forum and a "walk-for-a-cause" joined in by survivors, medical practitioners and civic groups. It asked government and private hospital to give free clinical breast examination and discounts for mammography.

The celebration was capped by a gala dinner attended by close to 70 breast cancer survivors and support group members who lighted candles on a huge two-tiered cake.

Kiss Goodbye

Recently, the Bosom FRIENDS was asked to partner with Avon, a cosmetics company, on its "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" program, which, in turn, linked with the Philippine Cancer Society and the Philippine General Hospital's Cancer Institute to raise funds through the sale of a breast cancer lipstick.

For every lipstick sold under the program, P5 will go to a fund to purchase a mammography machine for the PGH in April and to establish a permanent breast cancer center in the country.

The lipsticks have been given special names like Courage, Faith, Life, Heart and Strength, which embody the spirit of a breast cancer survivor.

Lily Ann Javier, Avon sales manager in Iloilo City, said her company would also try to raise funds for a local awareness campaign after being inspired by efforts of the Bosom FRIENDS to help survivors.

The Philippine Cancer Institute estimates that one in every 28 women will have breast cancer on their 64th birthday.

Breast cancer accounts for 4,000 deaths every year. Western Visayas had 180 cases of breast cancer in 2001, according to the Department of Health regional office.

Awareness campaign

Oncologist Anita Jesena said in an earlier interview that many deaths could have been prevented had cancer been detected in its earliest phase.

Jesena emphasized awareness and community support in helping women recognize their vulnerability to breast cancer, as well as ways on how to avoid having it.

Jesena has also underscored the need to make patients feel that they are in control of their bodies and future as they undergo treatment. Participating actively in making decisions for their own future is important in sustaining their morale, she said.

An accountant by profession before she became a pastor, Hofileña said God was calling her to take care of the needs of breast cancer survivors.

Even in death, there is a triumph over the disease because the woman was ready to face it, she said.

Hofileña likened cancer to sin, which is something that can be avoided. "Women should take care of their bodies, and avoid being overworked and stressed," she said.

Pangpang Massacre continues to haunt survivors of killings

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
San Jose, Antique

THE NIGHTMARES have not stopped for Luna Sanchez. In the middle of the night, he would wake up, hear gunfire, explosions and screams.

For 17 years, Sanchez, 72, has carried this burden of his past.

On May 13, 1984, on the eve of the Batasang Pambansa elections, Sanchez and seven of his relatives were on their way to Antique's capital town of San Jose from Libertad town to meet with then Gov. Evelio Javier. They were campaigning for Javier, who was running against former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador.

Around 11 p.m., as their Toyota Tamaraw-FX crossed the Pangpang Bridge in Sibalom town, 15 kilometers northeast of San Jose, they encountered Pacificador and his armed bodyguards in their vehicles.

To this day, both camps have accused each other of firing the first shot. When the gunfire and explosions stopped 10 minutes later, nine persons lay dead.

All of Sanchez's companions died: his son Aldrick, brother Rhium, cousin Mamerto Zaldivar Jr., nephew Plaridel IV, and distant relatives Clemente Sumalde, Armelito Tamboong and Abner Varon.

Two from the Pacificador camp, Jonathan Gallo and Marcos Yee, also died.

Sanchez survived but suffered multiple shrapnel wounds in the body and a deep bullet wound in the left leg. He was brought to the Angel Salazar Memorial Hospital for treatment but was transferred the next day to the house of former provincial board member Sammy Julian for security reasons.

He stayed for a month at the Binirayan Guest House with his relative and close ally of Javier, former Gov. Enrique Zaldivar, until he went to Manila and stayed there for three months for continued treatment and recuperation.

A dark day

The killings, which came to be known as the "Pangpang Massacre," have been considered among the darkest days of Antique. This took place at the peak of political conflict between Pacificador, who was supporting the Marcos dictatorship, and the opposition leader Javier.

The massacre was surpassed only by the assassination in broad daylight of Javier at the San Jose public plaza on Feb. 11, 1986.

On Feb. 18, 1986, then Senior State Prosecutor Tirso Velasco filed charges of multiple murder and frustrated murder against Pacificador and six of his security escorts.

Charged with Pacificador were former Philippine Constabulary S/Sgt. Domingo Dalmacio, Sgt. Enrico Cabanero, C2C Reynaldo Alipala, former Army Pfc Vicente Vegafria, former Integrated National Police Cpl. Hector Fullon and Pat. Lorenzo Mingote.

Pacificador was not arraigned with his men as he went into hiding after the Edsa Revolution on Feb. 25, 1986. He surfaced and surrendered to authorities nine years later, on March 8, 1985. He was tried separately for the killings.

The prosecution said it was murder, an ambush by the Pacificador camp, but the defense insisted that it was an encounter between the two groups, citing the death of two of Pacificador's men.

Ramon Salvani Jr., lawyer of Pacificador and his bodyguards, said he would ask the Supreme Court for a 30-day extension within which to file a motion for reconsideration.

He said he needed to study the records because two of the four defense lawyers have already died. The other lawyer, Avelino Javellana, is also detained for the Javier murder case.

"We found grounds that we honestly believed might have been overlooked by the Supreme Court," said Salvani.

Picking up the pieces

As the legal battle goes on, Sanchez continues to pick up the pieces of his life.

He was operating a rice mill and was manager of the Rural Bank of San Jose at the time of the massacre. His family was forced to sell the mill after he was unable to manage it because of his hospital confinement.

His body still bears pieces of shrapnel believed to have come from a rifle grenade. His wounded leg is partially numb.

"Many times, I would wake up at 1 a.m., asking why the killings happened," Sanchez said in Hiligaynon.

Sanchez, who now rarely leaves his home in Libertad, 125 km north of San Jose, said that at his age, he wants to rest and enjoy his twilight years. But the Supreme Court decision has highlighted the still unfinished chapter of his life.

"I want Pacificador convicted. Then I would be ready to die," Sanchez said, his voice choking.

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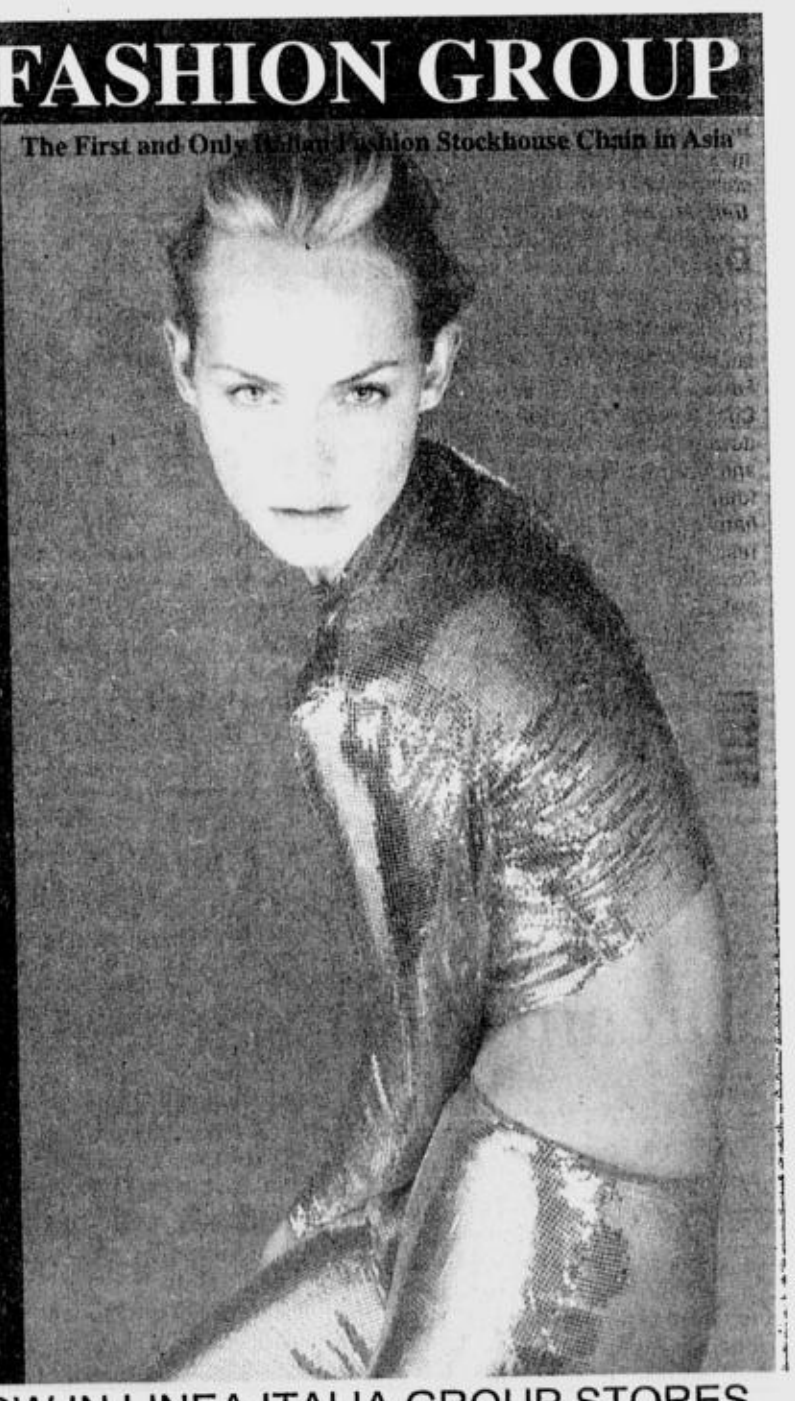
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Trust us, court tells Erap

From page A1

dent, he was and is a true gentleman."

Until the last minute, authorities were in the dark as to what Estrada might do on the day of the resumption of his trial, and considered the option of bodily carrying him to court if he refused to attend the hearing.

The *barong*-clad Estrada, walking with the usual limp, entered the courtroom around 9:10 a.m. accompanied by his wife Sen. Luisa Ejercito and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito, his son by ex-actress Guia Gomez.

Also in the Estrada party were Ferdie Ramos, a member of his media relations staff, and Jay Flaminiano, one of his dismissed lawyers.

Seated two rows behind Estrada, Flaminiano was seen by reporters passing notes to the ex-President during the three-hour hearing.

But Flaminiano later told the INQUIRER that he was there only to lend "moral support" to his ex-client. He also said the notes he was seen passing contained his "comments" on the proceedings.

Throughout the hearing Estrada was allowed to rise and address the court unassisted by counsel whenever Nazario sensed that he wanted to say something.

He started off by reiterating his rejection of the de officio lawyers and alleging that the Sandiganbayan special division was created to convict him.

Scandalous

Except for Rodolfo Jimenez, who used to lawyer for former first lady Imelda Marcos, Estrada's de officio lawyers formally entered their appearance yesterday. ***(Story on page A1)***

Jimenez questioned his being teamed with lawyers from the PAO, noting that it was under the Department of Justice, "the trunk of the prosecution arm of the government."

He said such an arrangement would be "scandalous and anomalous."

Nazario directed Jimenez to put his complaint in writing, but maintained that he would remain as Estrada's counsel until his appointment had been duly recalled.

The court also denied his request to be excused from the proceedings.

PAO chief Persida Acosta rose in reaction to Jimenez's "insinuations" against her office.

She recalled that it was the PAO that successfully worked for the release of "147 Erap supporters" charged with rebellion in connection with last year's Labor Day attack on Malacañang.

"It's proof that we're acting on our independent mandate despite our being under the justice department and the President appointing the PAO chief," Acosta said.

Motion for postponement

The Estrada lawyers were unanimous in asking for the postponement of proceedings, with Pamaran even calling for a "two-month" suspension of the trial.

"I cannot make heads or tails of it. I'll be shooting in the dark (if we proceed today)," said Crescini, who registered the first motion for postponement.

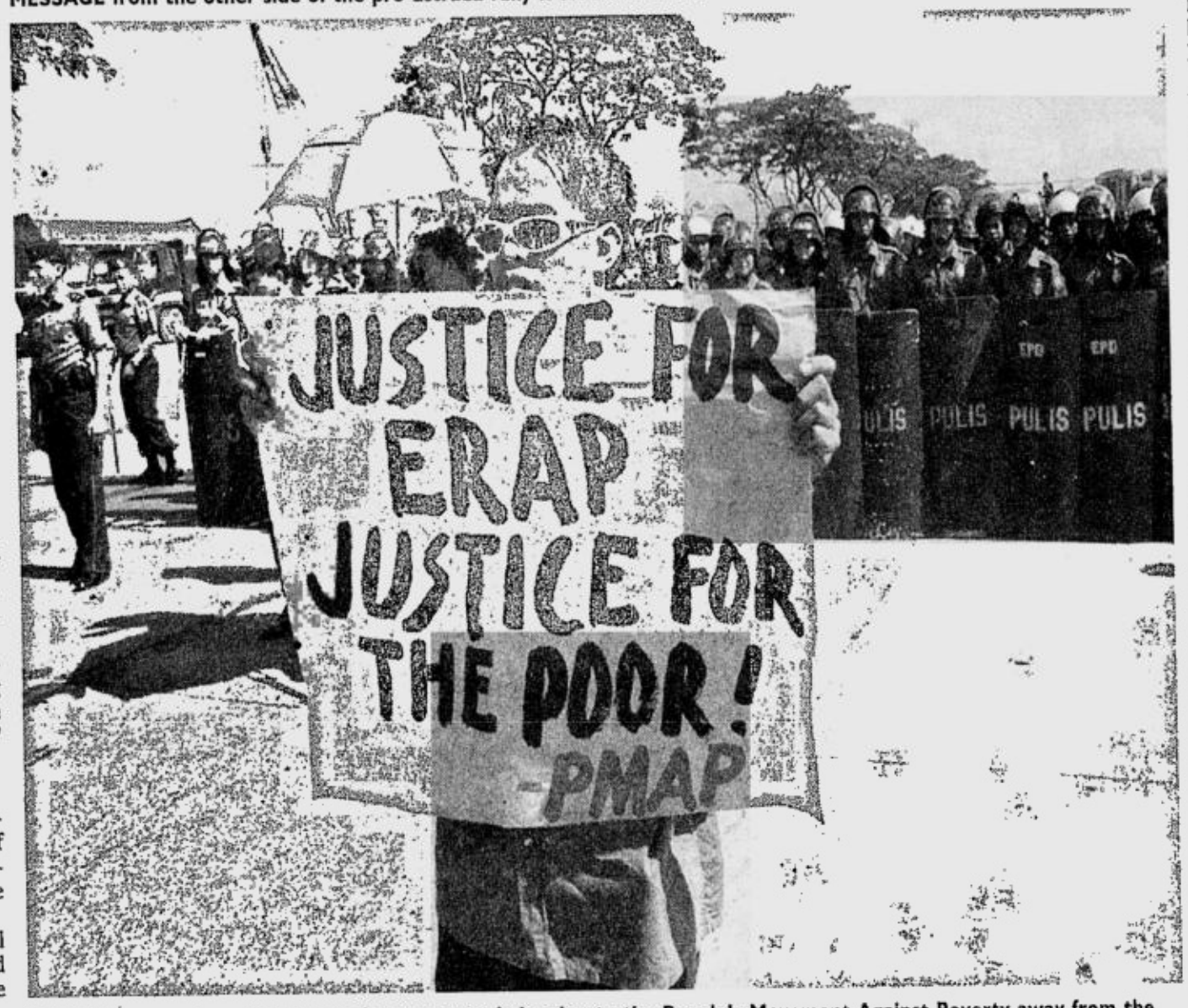
But the court granted them only about a month to catch up. It set the following schedule:

- April 12—Estrada's arraignment for his second perjury case and start of the pre-trial for his case involving illegal use of alias.
- April 15—Resumption of his plunder trial, with state prosecutors expected to present a new witness, Equitable PCI Bank lawyer Manuel Curato.

The court reset to April 3 its second hearing on Estrada's motion to undergo knee surgery in the United States.

The perjury arraignment, pre-trial and hearing on the motion to travel were supposedly scheduled for yesterday.

MESSAGE from the other side of the pro-Estrada rally is loud and clear. RANDY HORMILLOSA



POLICE lines cordon off pro-Estrada supporters belonging to the People's Movement Against Poverty away from the Sandiganbayan premises. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Other rulings

In other open court rulings, Nazario denied the PAO's March 14 request that the agency be dropped as Estrada counsel on the grounds that private lawyers had already been tapped for him and that, as a non-indigent, the ex-President did not qualify as a client.

The court also designated Estrada's de officio lawyers to represent his co-accused son Jinggoy, who had likewise dismissed his original lawyers.

After Estrada declared that he would neither accept court-appointed lawyers nor act as his own counsel, Nazario said: "It becomes now the responsibility of the court to ensure that your rights and interests are protected.

"The proceedings will continue despite the rejection. The court is compelled and mandated to appoint de officio counsel."

Estrada also requested that he be excused from future hearings, citing the "P1 million" spent by the PNP just to escort him and secure the court's premises.

He complained of pain in his knees, and said it would be "mental torture" to see himself being defended by de officio lawyers with whom he was not cooperating.

But Nazario told Estrada that while the justices "understand your sufferings," they had to protect "the integrity of the court" that he had been attacking in media interviews.

She said the court decided to cancel his previously approved waiver of appearance so he could personally witness the proceedings.

"We'll approve the waiver again if you stop attacking the court," she said, adding that it would issue a resolution on the matter shortly. ***With a report from TJ Burgonio***

Cops keep pro, anti rallies apart

From page A1

The group, composed mostly of teenagers, had a brief program led by the People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP). During the rally, PMAP spokesperson Arnold Obina reiterated Estrada's allegation that Sandiganbayan justices were biased against him.

"Clearly, we cannot expect justice to be served to Mr. Estrada, what with the justices railroading his case," Obina said.

As Obina had promised the chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, Edgardo Aglipay, no confrontation took place between the protesters and police, who kept a 15-meter distance from the crowd.

Sonia Lorena, 56, an Estrada supporter, said the mass action was aimed at showing that Estrada still had a following.

Only for TV

"Nagpakita lang kami sa (We just wanted to appear on) TV," said Lorena, who disclosed that she came all the way from San Pedro, Laguna.

PMAP members, who had earlier vowed to march on the Sandiganbayan, did not go beyond the St. Peter's Church, apparently because they failed to get a permit.

But anti-Estrada groups managed to stage a rally in front of the Sandiganbayan. The rally turned violent.

The watchdog group PlunderWatch held Aglipay accountable for the clash between 50 protesters and civilian policemen.

Renato Reyes, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan spokesperson, said he spoke with Aglipay when the police official dropped by the area.

"I promised him that we would try not to obstruct the traffic as long as we could conduct our program in front of the Sandiganbayan," Reyes said.

"But he told me that the police were being pressured by the pro-Erap groups who were blocked at the St. Peter's Church and that they had to do something apparently so as not to offend them," the Bayan spokesperson said.

Dispersal

Reyes claimed that a Central Police District official had promised to give his group 30 minutes to finish the program when the dispersal took place.

"We were surprised when civilian agents suddenly started grabbing our streamers and pushing us away," he said.

Reyes maintained that PlunderWatch was considering filing a complaint against Aglipay for the harassment of its members.

The Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR) condemned the dispersal, saying this showed the extent of the government's "paranoia."

In a statement, PCPR deputy secretary general Amie Dural said the dispersal was uncalled for because the PCPR, the PlunderWatch and other groups were peacefully holding the rally. The groups were demanding "no compromise, no exile for Estrada."

"This latest act of police brutality shows that the Macapagal administration is so paranoid and afraid of pro-Estrada rallies to the extent of dispersing even those staged by vigilant organizations demanding speedy prosecution and punishment of Estrada," Dural said.

She accused members of the Central Intelligence and Detention Group (CIDG) of starting the fracas by seizing the streamers and flags of the PlunderWatch, PCPR, Bayan, Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap, Gabriela and other militant organizations.

The PCPR urged Ms Macapagal to reprimand the CIDG, saying that it should distinguish peaceful rallies from violent demonstrations.

2,000 PNP personnel

The Philippine National Police deployed at least 2,000 of its personnel for the trial of Estrada.

Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, PNP spokesperson, defended the deployment from criticism that it was "an overkill."

"The security arrangement was not excessive. The security preparations were made to meet any contingency," he said at a press briefing.

At least 1,000 members of the civil disturbance management units were fielded at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center where Estrada is detained, Sandiganbayan and Commonwealth Mall Market—all in Quezon City. Another 1,000 PNP personnel were sent to the Chino Roces Bridge (formerly Mendiola), the Supreme Court and the US Embassy—all in Manila.

Police officials disclosed that the deployment cost the PNP some P250,000, which they said was far lower than the P600,000 spent during Estrada's previous trials.

Espina said, "the arrangements were successful, peaceful."

Despite the deployment of a large number of PNP personnel, some members of militant groups such as Bayan and Gabriela managed to get past the police cordon near the Sandiganbayan.

"We can't consider them lapses. They occur normally," Espina said. ***With a report from Armand Nocum***

'Dream team' starts arguing for defense

From page A1

cases in the Sandiganbayan, and my clients have been allowed to travel even for social reasons," Ongkiko said, adding:

"I think the accused is being singled out because I have a client who has 26 cases, almost equivalent to plunder, and he's been traveling, sometimes just to attend a meeting of the Jaycees."

Ongkiko cited as another example former first lady Imelda Marcos, who, he noted, had long-standing graft cases at the Sandiganbayan.

But Ombudsman Aniano Desierto countered that Ongkiko must have been referring to respondents who were allowed to travel by the court because they were not being tried for capital offenses such as plunder.

Desierto also said it was not a question of whether Estrada had a right to travel, but whether the law allowed a prisoner like him to "leave the jurisdiction of the court."

According to the Ombudsman, granting Estrada leave to go abroad even for medical reasons will be "a mockery" of the law's denial of bail for persons accused of capital offenses.

"Sending him out of the court's jurisdiction is tantamount to granting him bail," Desierto said.

No harm

Manuel Pamaran, a retired justice of the anti-graft court and now one of Estrada's de officio lawyers, said, "there will be no harm to the judicial process if the accused is allowed to travel."

Pamaran said there was even a "process" for "bringing (Estrada) back to serve his sentence" should he be convicted.

"There will be no disruption in the trial," Pamaran added. "He can be tried and a decision (on his case) promulgated *in absentia*."

Estrada himself said he could not "take the risk" of undergoing knee surgery in the Philippines. He cited the case of a former ambassador whose knee operation here supposedly resulted in complications that worsened the condition.

"I don't like the Ombudsman insinuating that I won't return," the ousted President said. "I will come back and I want a written guarantee from the government that I will be allowed to come back."

Estrada said he would demand such a guarantee because shortly after his ouster in January 2001, the government supposedly "thrice" offered him exit from the country.

"But I didn't leave," he said.

Gentleman

To Justice Edilberto Sandoval's question, "What if the accused fails to return," Ongkiko responded that as a longtime resident of Estrada's hometown of San Juan, "I know the gentleman and I have yet to hear of an occasion he has failed on his word."

The veteran lawyer also said the court should decide on the matter based on its own "previous rulings and not on presumptions" advanced mainly by state prosecutors led by Desierto.

Tossing what he termed as "preliminary questions" to Ongkiko, Sandoval said: "Are not these cases tainted with political color that asylum can be justifiable?"

Ongkiko replied: "Let's remove ourselves from political issues and be practical." He also dismissed the idea of Estrada's seeking political asylum as "speculative."

The Sandiganbayan appointed Ongkiko, Pamaran, Rodolfo Jimenez, Prospero Crescini, Irene Jurado and four lawyers from the Public Attorneys Office to serve as Estrada's de officio counsel.

Asked to size up the opposing panel, State Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said it was a "dream defense team for any accused."

"But the problem is that they saw how prepared we (prosecutors) are, and that their client had already admitted he signed (bank documents) as 'Jose Velarde,'" Villa-Ignacio told the INQUIRER.

Pamaran, who served as the first presiding justice of the Sandiganbayan in 1979-86, now finds himself pleading to a bench chaired by his former clerk of court, Acting Presiding Justice Minita Nazario.

Asked by reporters whether he felt awkward being in such a situation, he quipped: "Life's like that."

Pamaran is also known as the "hanging judge," for having sent many a convict to the electric chair during his earlier stint with the Manila Regional Trial Court.

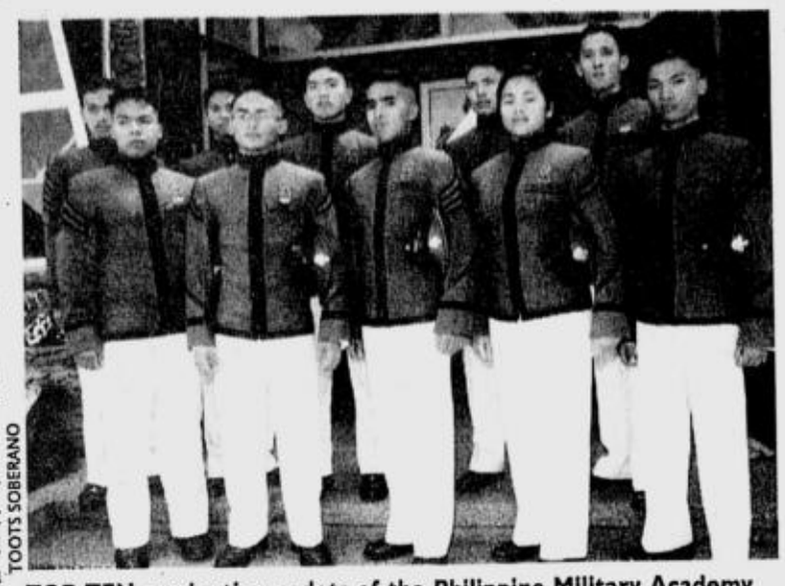
Kalinga girl is PMA's top athlete

From page A1

you come from a mountainous province like Kalinga as long as you have the motivation for it," Bucalen said.

She started learning taekwondo when she was a second year cadet.

She got interested in the PMA when she was in high school after swimming at the military academy during the defunct Cordillera Regional Athletics Association competitions. She practiced swimming in resorts in Tuguegarao, Cagayan.



TOOTS SOBERANO

TOP TEN graduation cadets of the Philippine Military Academy Banyuhay Class of 2002. Charlie Domingo (first row, 3rd from left) of Isabela province is graduating No. 1.

Valedictorian

The PMA yesterday presented to media the topnotchers of Banyuhay Class of 2002.

The class name means *bagong anyo ng buhay* (new meaning of life) and could have come from the 1980s Filipino folk rock group, Banyuhay, headed by Heber Bartolome.

Cadet First Class Charlie Antonio Domingo is class valedictorian, leading 138 graduating cadets.

He will receive the presidential saber from President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Philippine Navy saber, and the humanities, languages and leadership saber for being the class president.

Despite being the top cadet, Domingo said he had experienced being on the removal list when he was a fourth class cadet.

"That's why I never thought I would be in the Top 10, much more top the class. The grading system was cumulative so (I had expected that) my (failure in) math would surely affect my standing. I am glad it didn't," he said.

He said he had not informed his guardians yet of his achievement.

"But I know (my uncle) will be very happy."

Domingo was raised by his uncle, Sinfrosio Antonio, a government employee in Isabela who sent him to elementary and high school.

Domingo took up engineering at the Adamson University and it was his uncle who motivated him to enter the PMA after two years in college.

"The hardships I suffered since my mother died when I was only 5 had motivated me to stand on my own. I drew strength from my uncle's sacrifices. (Now) I can smile when I look back to the time when I was an orphan," he said.

(The INQUIRER inadvertently reported it was his father who had died.)

The 24-year-old topnotcher said his father abandoned him when he was 6 years old.

"But I already forgave him. In fact, I want him to see me and be proud of me on my graduation day but I don't know where he is and I believe he has a family of his own now," he said.

Other topnotchers

The class salutatorian, Chris Canon Baloran, will receive the vice president saber, the Philippine Army saber and Association of Generals and Flag Officers Inc. award for being the chair of the honors committee.

Third placer Roldan Paras Mira will receive the secretary of national defense saber and the social sciences and Army professional courses plaque.

Jojie Delizo Bravo will receive the Philippine Air Force saber and Allexon Berana Ramos will be given the Air Force professional courses plaque.

Terrence Pizon Ylanan will get the management plaque.

Rounding up the Top 10 are Marc Bien Steven Jariol Deslate, William Alfred Tapang Rodriguez, Archibald Sison Magbanua and Jean Alia Yasin Robles.

Highest-ranking female

Robles, 23, the highest-ranking female cadet, will also receive the history and strategy plaque.

Robles, whose mother is a Muslim, said her being a woman and a Muslim had prodded her to excel in the PMA.

"This is my way of showing that Muslims are not enemies of the state but can also serve as military officers," she said.

She said she wanted to be assigned in Basilan, her mother's province, "to help my province mates attain peace."

Her father is a retired Army colonel.

Robles was a broadcast communication student at the University of the Philippines in Diliman when she decided to enter the PMA.

Her sister Jasmin is also a PMAyer.

Class Baron is Melkie Balasolla Tadeo. He will also be awarded the AFP chief of staff saber.

Nilo Siddayao will receive the Aguinaldo saber while Mark Buhion will receive the Tambuli and Jusmag awards, the weapons systems, engineering sciences, natural sciences plaques, as well as the most improved cadet plaque.

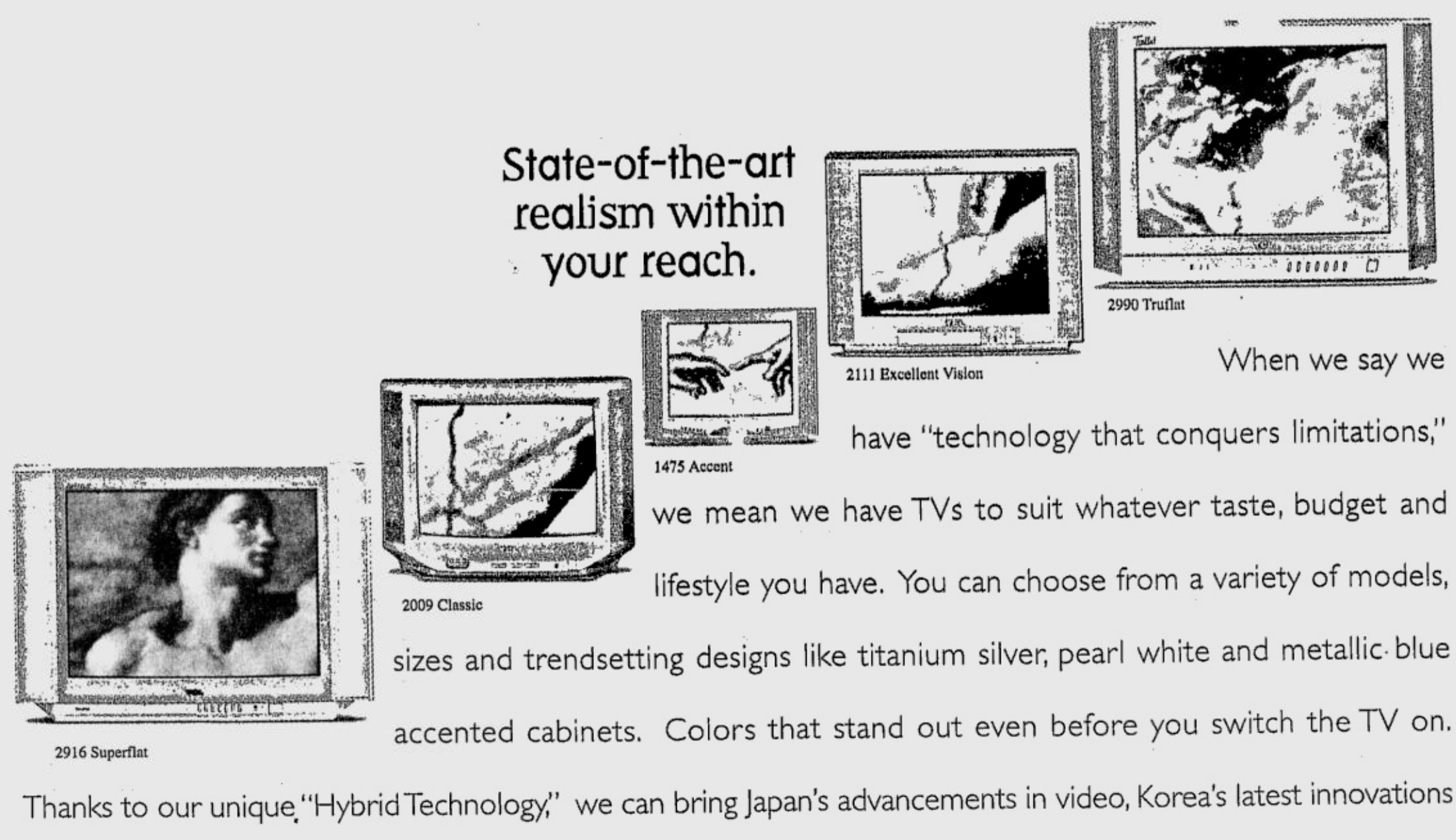
Other awardees

The other awardees are Lakschmi R. Talidano (journalism award), Ronald Diso (Navy professional courses), Ian Luis Badecao III (plaque of excellence and physical education plaque), Owen Florenda (computer sciences) and Van Donald Almonte (mathematics plaque).

The class goat is Gregory Inumpa Jr., son of First Sgt. Gregory Inumpa Sr. who heads the PMA academic support personnel at Fort Del Pilar.

"It is still an achievement to be the Class Goat," Inumpa said.

A total of 65 cadets opted to join the Army, 40 (including two women) the Navy, and 33 (including two women) the Air Force.



SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza • Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Cainta hosts age-group tennis

BURLINGTON Industries Phil. and SEMG SportsNet will stage the third leg of the 2002 Burlington Age Group Tennis Challenge on March 16 and 17 at the Sta. Lucia Greenland Tennis Courts in Cainta, Rizal. Interested parties may call tel. nos. 635-6196 and 635-6197.

Swede tanker smashes record

GOTEBORG, Sweden—Emma Igelstrom of Sweden broke the world short-course swimming record in the 50-meter breaststroke Thursday, clocking 30.24 seconds. Competing in the Swedish Championships, Igelstrom improved British swimmer Zoe Baker's old mark, set in January, by seven hundredths of a second as she won the final. Only 15 minutes earlier, Igelstrom had lowered her personal record in the 400 medley. *AP*

Pals try to sustain victory run vs Gins

By June Navarro

GAMES TODAY: Cuneta Astrodome
4 p.m.—Ginebra vs Talk N Text
6 p.m.—Alaska vs Coca-Cola

SINCE its demolition of the Hapee-RP Team three weeks ago, Talk N Text had undergone two down-the-wire encounters.

Although they came out against San Miguel Beer and Sta. Lucia Realty unscathed, the Phone Pals are not totally contented with the manner of winning those matches.

"Of course I'm happy with the outcome but it's gonna be more satisfying if we win by huge margins," said Talk N Text coach Bill Bayno, whose Phone Pals are on a three-game winning streak for a 3-1 record.

Bayno is hoping his wards would not only extend their run but win impressively against Barangay Ginebra in the PBA Samsung Governors Cup today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Kings are languishing in the cellar with a 1-4 card despite hiring the services of a prolific import in Desmond Fergusson to team up with Jarrod Gee.

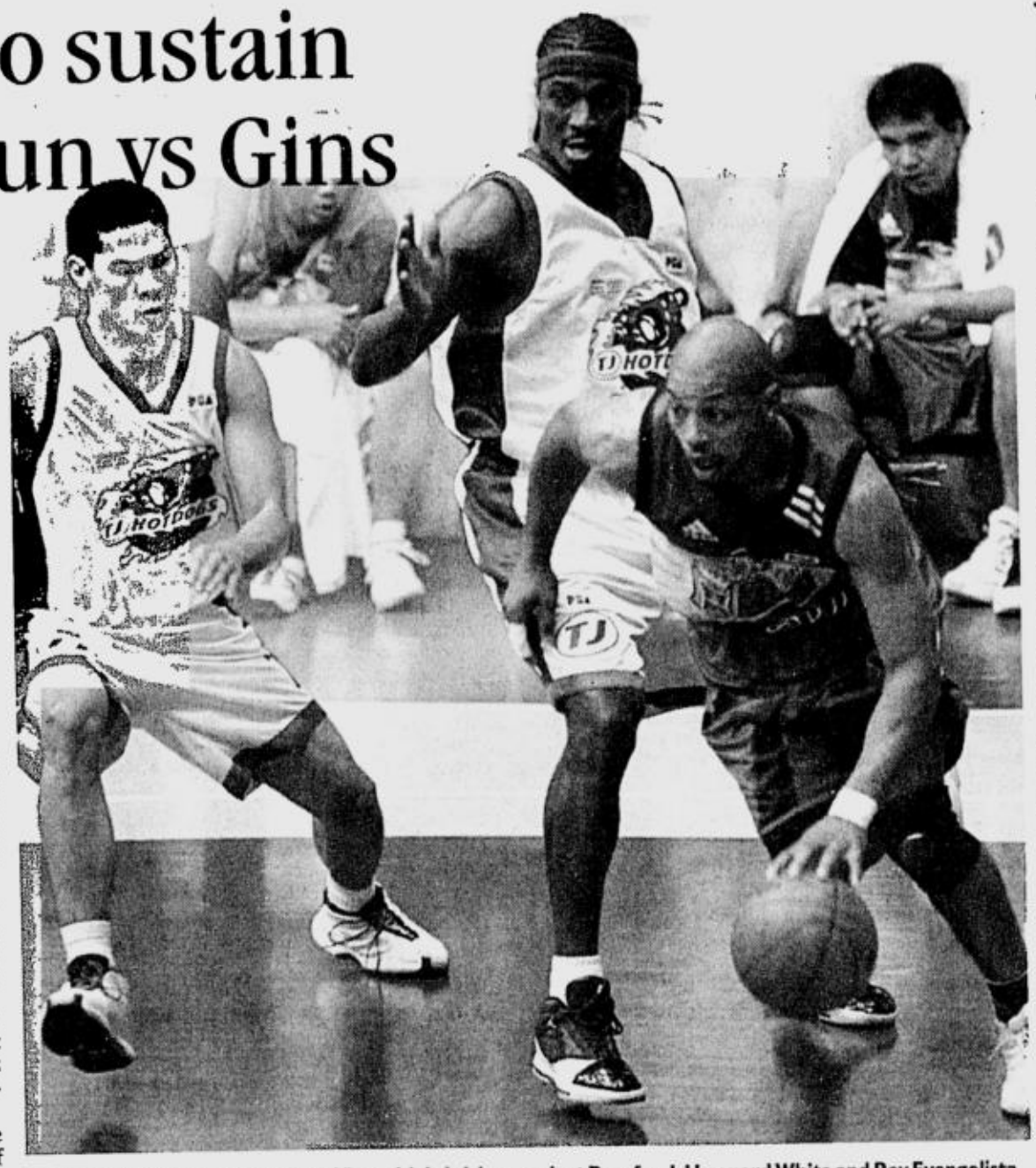
Fergusson, a 6-foot-4 three-point specialist, erupted with eight triples to lead the Kings in a 74-82 losing endeavor against the Coca-Cola Tigers last week.

Fergusson and Gee will be ranged against the dynamic duo of Gerald Honeycutt and Richie Frahm, the Phone Pals' top soldiers who combine for almost 50 points a night.

Hapee triumphs

Meanwhile, Hapee-RP Team dumped Shell, 82-69, last night in a PBA out-of-town game in Malolos, Bulacan.

Jeffrey Cariaso, Rudy Hatfield, Davonn Harp, Mick Pennisi and Renren Ritualo were again at their best as they led Hapee-RP to its fourth win after six appearances.



LAMONT Strothers of San Miguel Beer (right) drives against Purefoods' Leonard White and Rey Evangelista during their PBA game at the Makati Coliseum last Thursday night. Purefoods triumphed, 72-70. ROMY HOMILLADA

RP-Guardo rules Seaba

By Roy Luarca

CEBU CITY—Aldrin Ocanada pumped in five points in the last 65 seconds as RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier edged RP-Spring Cooking Oil, 117-114, in overtime to rule the Southeast Asia Basketball Association (Seaba) Champion's Cup at the Cebu Coliseum here.

The heroics of the burly 6-foot-2 Ocanada, who had seen action for Cebu and Surigao in the MBA, turned the game around for RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier, which endured a tight game against the equally determined RP-Spring Cooking Oil.

"I give it to the boys. We want to prove that local teams can beat their Manila counterparts," said RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier coach Yayoy Alcoseba.

Though M. Lhuillier also beat Spring Cooking Oil for the CBL President's Cup title late last month, it was tainted by the Cooking Oil Experts' walkout. Regulation play ended at 104-104 after RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier's Junnel Maglasang, chosen as MVP of the tournament, canned two freethrows with 23 seconds left.

The Cooking Oil Experts' cause was hurt by the fouling out of Hamsa Jihad late in the fourth quarter, leaving Bobby Parks to carry the fight in the game which saw several players from both sides foul out.

Ricky Ricafuente put up a sterling shooting display in the second quarter, stringing five triples as the Cooking Oil Experts surged ahead at 45-37. RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier, composed of Cebu Basketball League stars and MBA players, was able to regain the lead at 52-51 through Junel Maglasang

Earlier, Petronas Malaysia exacted revenge over Aspac Texmaco Indonesia, 76-61, to clinch third place. Thong Whye of Singapore wound up fifth and last in the tournament supported by Osaka Iridology, Accel, the official outfitter; Burlington socks, Molten balls, YKL Color, Absolute Distilled Water and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

The Tito Palma-mentored RP-Spring Cooking Oil, co-owned by Tac Padilla and Herbert de Jesus, however, earned the right to represent the country in the Asian Basketball Confederation Cup slated in Kuala Lumpur next month because RP-Guardo-M. Lhuillier is a guest team.

Scores:

RP-GUARDO-M. LHUILLIER 117—Marata 24, Ocanada 24, Jaca 20, Maglasang 14, Smith 12, Reyes 10, Huelar 7, White 6, Enriquez 2.

RP-SPRING OIL 114—Parks 25, Ricafuente 22, Garcia 16, Jihad 14, Reyes 11, Co 10, De Castro 10, Lapena 2, Buendia 1.

Halftime: 55-60; 104-104 (reg.)

Hingis spanks Seles anew; Sampras, Hewitt pull thru

INDIAN WELLS, California—Martina Hingis of Switzerland beat America's Monica Seles 6-3, 6-2 Thursday in the semifinals of the Pacific Life Open.

Hingis will meet Slovakia's Daniela Hantuchova in Saturday's final as she tries for her second Pacific Life title in four years. Hantuchova, 18, beat Switzerland's Emmanuelle Gagliardi 4-6, 6-0, 6-4.

Hingis' victory continued her domination of Seles, the 1992 Indian Wells champion. The 21-year-old Swiss star ran her record against the 28-year-old Seles to 15-4.

Seles beat Hingis both times they met last year, but Hingis has won all three of their matches this year.

Earlier Thursday, Pete Sampras struggled to qualify for the men's quarterfinals with a 6-3, 3-6, 7-5 win over Frenchman Fabrice Santoro. Top-ranked Australian Lleyton Hewitt advanced with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over Jan-Michael Gambill of the United States and second-seeded Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov defeated Juan Ignacio Chela of Argentina 7-6(8), 6-4.

Santoro had won three of six previous matches against Sampras.

"He gives a lot of guys problems, including myself," Sampras said. "He's very experienced, a smart player. He's very, very quick and returns well."

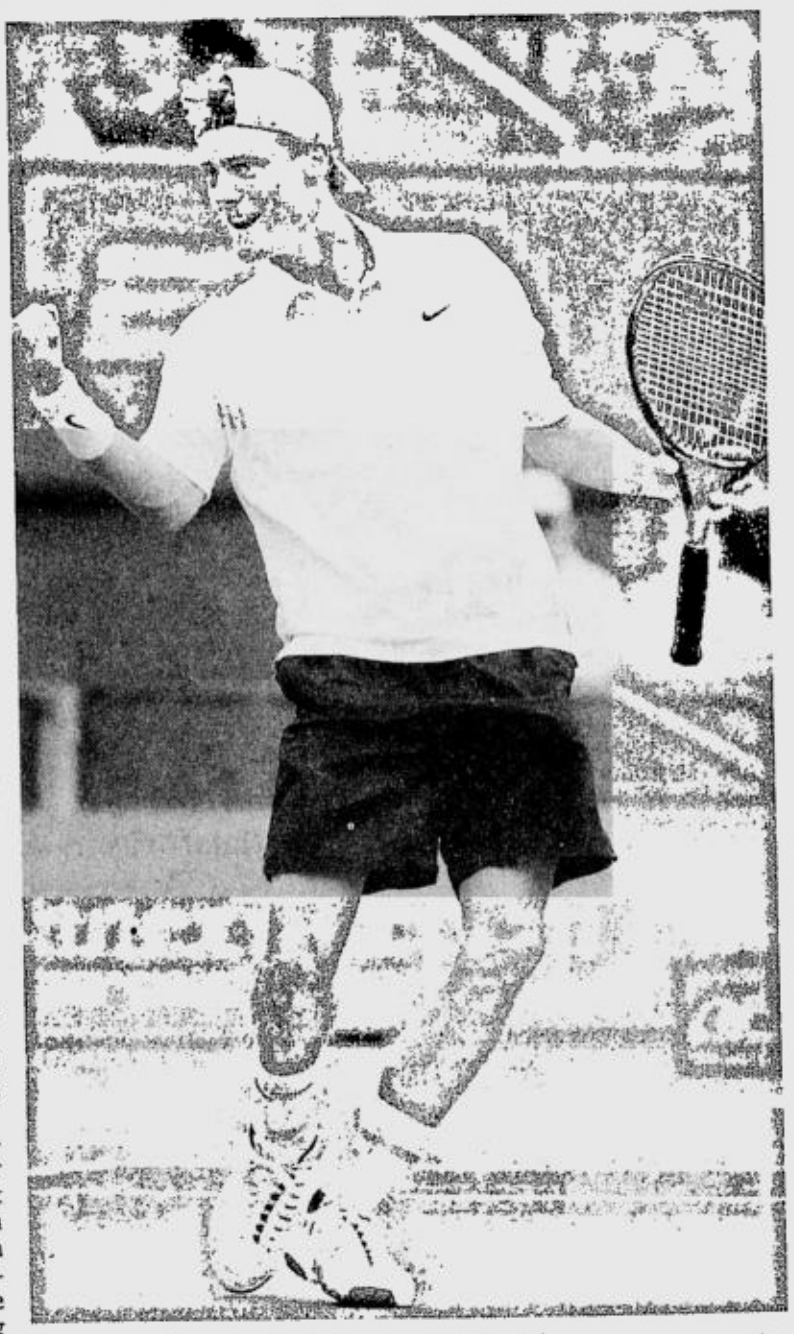
Sampras appeared on his way to an easy win after breezing through the first set, but his game turned sour in the second.

After building a 5-2 lead in the third set, Sampras lost the next three games before getting back on track. He held service to go up 6-5, then broke Santoro—who double faulted on the final point.

"I missed a lot of volleys, but I was able to scrap out of the match," Sampras said. "Competition gets tougher, so I hope I can raise my level a little bit in the next couple of days." *AP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, the National Capital Region posted 335 points to retained the National State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association (Scuaa) title in Bacolod City. Also today in 1991, Western Visayas garnered 18 golds to claim the 1991 Palarong Pambansa crown in Iloilo City.



HEWITT rejoices after defeating Gambill, 6-2, 6-4. AP

Constantino Cup Sunday

GOVERNMENT officials, business executives, diplomats and sports personalities will play for the Newsmakers when they tangle with the Tennistars tomorrow (March 17) at the PNOC tennis courts in Fort Bonifacio during the 15th Renato Constantino Cup.

Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, Supreme Court Administrator Presby Velasco, Chairman Ed Villanueva and Commissioner Angel Bautista of the Games and Amusements Board are some of the government officials joining the tennis tournament.

The business group in the Newsmakers team is led by former Prime Minister Cesar Virata of Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and several executives of the Philippine Oil Company and the Asian Development Bank.

POC wary of NSAs attendance

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Olympic Committee secretary general Romy Ribaño yesterday expressed concerns that some national sports association heads are again planning to boycott the coming general assembly on March 21.

Ribaño said the POC's main concern right now is how to get maximum attendance during the meeting which will tackle vital Asian Games matters. The sports body was stung by the boycott of at least 15 NSA heads during the Jan. 31 general assembly.

Now that the Asiad is drawing near, the POC secretary general said the attendance will be the indication of the state of affairs of the POC and Philippine sports as well.

"Low attendance indicates that there is a problem in the POC whether real, perceived or imagined," said Ribaño. "It reflects the internal affairs of the POC whether we like it or not."

He was referring to the low turnout during Jan. 30 assembly where the POC almost failed to get a quorum when disgruntled NSA leaders like athletics' Go Teng Kok, tennis' Buddy Andrada, taekwondo's Robert Aventajado and judo's Reynaldo Jaylo snubbed the meeting.

WBO fight at Elorde's backed

THE WORLD Boxing Organization Aspac lightflyweight championship bout today between two formidable Filipino sluggers got a big boost through Pinnacle Sports, a Curacao-based wagering company.

WBO No. 11 and former RP lightflyweight champion Celso Danggod battles WBO No. 12 Jonnie Coma at the ballroom of Elorde Sports Complex in Parañaque City.

Supporting the event are the fights pitting World Boxing Council international flyweight champion Randy Mangubat against Tata Polinar and WBC international minimumweight champion Ernesto Rubillar against Ben Albañez. Booth fights are scheduled for 10-rounds.

The slugfest will be staged by Elorde International Productions under seasoned boxing promoter Gabriel "Bebot" Elorde Jr. and backed by Pinnacle Sports Worldwide, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Manila Bulletin, Lotus Garden Hotel, City Garden Suites, Roberto Sporting Wear and Manila Bulletin.

Fights start at 5 p.m. The main event begins at 8 p.m. For more details, call 825-7229.

Pinnacle Sports gives every customer the ability to bet at a lower price on most sporting events as it aims its product and services to a more global market. The firm boasts of its own in-house IT department making it one of the strongest online sports betting markets worldwide.

BROTHERS Tonton (second from left) and Monching Guiterrez sign their contract for the Dickies Racing Team. Also shown (from left) are Dody Arcaya, vice president for sales and marketing, and Abing Chan, chief executive officer.

Dickies girds for Subic race

By Dennis U. Eroa

THE NEWLY FORMED Dickies Racing Team is expected to figure prominently as it competes for the first time in the 2002 SVI racing circuit which hits the road on April 13-14 at the Subic International Raceway inside the SBMA.

Brothers Monching and Tonton Gutierrez will spearhead the bid of Dickies, the world's number one workwear, to achieve a lofty position in the country's upbeat racing scene.

"Dickies is proud to back up Monching and Tonton as they go for honors in the racing scene," said Dody Arcaya, Dickies vice president for sales and marketing. In a short span of time, Dickies has become a byword among the country vibrant and cool crowd.

Arcaya, a prominent name from Gumaca, Quezon, stressed that Dickies will also focus on the various kinds of racing (slalom, rallyecross, open, etc) while putting emphasis on safety driving.

"Beyond glamor, Dickies also wants to instill responsible driving," said Arcaya. "We're also here for the love of sports and we're hoping that we can help in adding to the popularity of racing in the country."

Arcaya said the Dickies launch will be held on April 6 with Dickies Racing USA ace Trent Owens, 26-year-old nephew of seven-time Nascar V champion, Richard Petty joining the guest lists. Owens will drive Dickies Ford F-150 and compete in the 2002 Nascar Craftsman Truck Series.

Gutierrez, a former teen idol, will defend his Challenge Cup title against a host of highly rated competitors. Tonton, who took a break from competitions racing last year due to his various commitments, will compete in Class C. Ian de Leon may also join the team.

Chiang Kai Shek netter tops meet

LIM

SECOND seed Arithmetico Lim whipped top seed Marvic Leo, 6-2, 6-3, to bag the boys' 14-and-under title in the Philta Classic I Age Group Championship recently at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The 13-year-old Lim, a first year high school and an honor student of Chiang Kai Shek College in Pasay, notched his sixth 14-under title. He had earlier topped the Manzano Cup, Philta/Head Championship, Junior Tennis Cup, Adidas Cup and Andrada Cup.

Lim will represent the Philippines in the East Asian Championships 14-and-under team event slated April 1-13 in Indonesia and ITF Championships in Sri Lanka on April 20-26.

Two slots

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

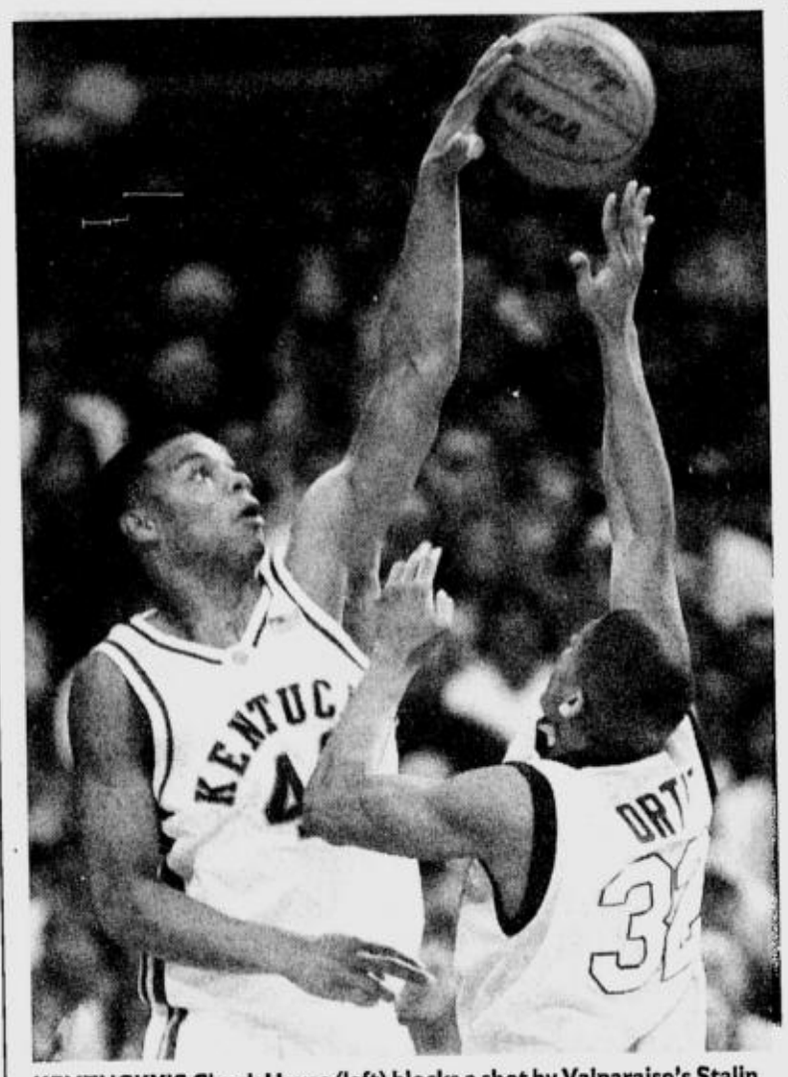
ONLY two roster berths, along with one other alternate, on the all-NBA U.S. team to the World Championships in Indianapolis in late August remain up for grabs after USA Basketball added three more players to their original seven choices on March 12.

Named by the selection committee were Boston forward Paul Pierce, Cleveland guard Andre Miller (G) and Jermaine O'Neal (F-C) of host Indiana, Ray Allen (G) of Milwaukee, Antonio Davis (F-C) of Toronto, Shawn Marion (F) of Phoenix, Michael Finley (G-F) of Dallas and Jason Kidd (G) of New Jersey.

Chosen as one of the two alternates was All-America guard Jason Williams of the nationally top-ranked and defending NCAA champion Duke Blue Devils. The other alternate is expected to come from the collegiate ranks as well.

Milwaukee's George Karl is the U.S. head coach.

Surprisingly, Philadelphia star Allen Iverson has yet to be named to the team. The 6-foot Iverson, the 2001 NBA MVP who is headed for his second straight NBA scoring crown and third overall in the last four seasons, was bypassed for the 2000 Sydney Olympics apparently due to his unsavory reputation off the court. An ex-convict with tattoos all over his body, "The Answer" could find himself again out of the quadrennial World meet as there appears no more room for another "small" guard on the roster.



KENTUCKY'S Chuck Hayes (left) blocks a shot by Valparaiso's Stalin Ortiz in the first half. Kentucky won, 83-68. AP

NCAA UPSETS

Low-seeded Tulsa, Missouri, Kent win

NEW YORK—Sure it didn't take long for low-seeded teams to pick up right where they left off last year in the NCAA tournament.

Tulsa, Missouri and Kent State all advanced to the second round with upset victories Thursday, when only two of the tourney's first eight games featured a favorite winning easily.

Tulsa and Missouri are seeded No. 12; Kent State is a No. 10.

In 2001, 13 of the tournament's 32 first-round games were won by underdogs - the most opening victories by teams seeded ninth or worse since the event expanded to 64 teams in 1985.

The upset total was nearly higher Thursday, but Alabama, seeded No. 2 in the South, and Ohio State, No. 4 in the West, narrowly avoided being bounced.

In the East Regional in St. Louis, Greg Harrington's runner in the lane with 14.6 seconds left pushed Tulsa past No. 5 Marquette 71-69 in the tightest early game.

Tulsa now takes a crack at pulling off another surprise - and it would come against its former coach.

The Golden Hurricane next face fourth-seeded Kentucky, which beat Valparaiso 83-68. Kentucky coach Tubby Smith guided Tulsa to the round of 16 in 1994 and '95.

In the West Regional in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Missouri scored the first 12 points and knocked off No. 5-seeded Miami 93-80. The Tigers will try to register another shocker against Ohio State, which barely got by Davidson 69-64.

And in the South Regional in Greenville, South Carolina, Kent State started the streak of surprises by topping No. 7 Oklahoma State 69-61 in the tournament's very first game.

Kent State now plays Alabama, which was tied with 15th-seeded Florida Atlantic with about seven minutes left but won 86-78.

In the Midwest Regional in Sacramento, California, No. 2-seeded Oregon beat Montana 81-62, and seventh-seeded Wake Forest defeated Pepperdine 83-79.

East St. Louis Tulsa 71, Marquette 69

After Harrington's go-ahead shot, Marquette settled for Travis Diener's hasty 3-pointer from well beyond the arc. The shot was an air ball, and Dwyane Wade couldn't grab it for a follow at the buzzer. Antonio Reed scored 18 points as the Golden Hurricane won a first-round game for the fourth straight time.

Kentucky 83, Valparaiso 68

Keith Bogans had 21 points, and Tayshaun Prince made up for poor shooting with strong defense on Valpo star Lubos Barton. *AP*

Galleros 5th leg gets going today

THE FIFTH leg of the Galleros de Manila 5-Cock Derby is set today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit with 75 exciting fights.

Hosting this event sponsored by Ninja Superfeeds are lawyer Romero Yu, Dennis del Rosario, Tiny Meneses, Gene Avendano, Marlon Ayuste, Al Martija and Rommer Nipa.

The Jimar entry of Jimmyton Araneta conquered the fourth leg of the Galleros de Manila circuit held on March 4 with five points.

Leading in the cocker of the year standings after four legs are Bobby del Rosario of Mangzee Gamefarm, Iking Araneta of the Hacienda Enara entry and the JM Intruder entry of Saipan-based Jhun Marasigan with 13 points each.

For details, call Roligon at 833-16-38 or 833-22-75.

Family Futbol set

THE FIRST Family Futbol Cup kicks off on March 17, 4 p.m., at the Cuenca Park football field in Ayala Alabang.

Athletic De Larrauri and FC Mañosa square off in this soccer match featuring siblings of the Larrauri and Mañosa clans.

To spice up the matches, distant relatives and close family friends are recruited like PBA imports to beef up the teams.

NBA ROUNDUP

Knicks, Blazers, Lakers prevail

NEW YORK—Latrell Sprewell scored 43 points on 17-of-26 shooting as the New York Knicks overwhelmed the Sacramento Kings 113-96 at Madison Square Garden on Thursday.

Chris Webber, out with a dislocated right index finger, looked on as his friend ruined Sacramento's four-game winning streak.

Sprewell had 14 of the Knicks's season-high 38 points in the first quarter and added 10 in the second as New York built a commanding 64-48 lead.

After the Kings moved within 74-67 in the third quarter, Sprewell's three-pointer sparked a 12-0 run. Sacramento never got the deficit under double digits in the final period and fell to 3-1 on a five-game road trip that concludes Sunday in Toronto.

Blazers 132, Mavericks 106

In Portland, Oregon, Rasheed Wallace tied a season-high with 37 points as the Trail Blazers rebounded from their first defeat in nearly a month to crush the Dallas Mavericks 132-106 in one of the most stunning results of the season.

Lakers 110, Warriors 102

In Oakland, California, Shaquille O'Neal scored nine straight points after taking a flagrant foul from Danny Fortson late in the fourth quarter, powering the Los Angeles Lakers to a 110-102 victory over the Golden State Warriors.

Golden State beat the undermanned Lakers here on December 26 and forged a 92-92 tie in this one on an alley-oop layup by Fortson with 3:43 remaining.

Moments later, however, Fortson got tangled up with O'Neal and was called for a flagrant foul, his sixth. A fired-up O'Neal made two free throws with 3:29 left to put Los Angeles ahead for good.

O'Neal had 40 points and 13 rebounds, reaching the 40-point mark for the third time in his last five games.

Kobe Bryant contributed 21 points, seven rebounds and six assists and Rick Fox scored 16 points for Los Angeles.

COMPLETE RESULTS

Knicks 113, Kings 96; Blazers 132, Mavericks 106; Lakers 110, Warriors 102; Spurs 91, Bulls 86; Hornets 100, Jazz 82. *Reuters*

Sta. Elena tilt offers Carribean cruise

A SEVEN-DAY Carribean cruise for two and whopping cash jackpots of P500,000 and P300,000 will be raffled off in the sixth staging of the Sta. Elena Cup, the annual member-guest invitational tournament of the Sta. Elena Golf Club in Cabuyao, Laguna set on March 21-24.

As major sponsors, Royal Carribean and Northwest Airlines are jointly putting up the grand raffle prize which will be disputed by the full-packed roster 220 member-guest teams aside from the many other prizes totalling more than P1.5 million.

Nokia, the world's leading cellular company, is also a chief backer as well as Adidas Taylor Made and the Integrated Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI).

Club president Edward Tiu, tournament chair Jing Montano, Sta. Elena general manager Junie Ledesma and golf director Jun Cedo are working on what promises to be another eventful edition of the Elena Cup which was won last year by the all-female team of Nancy Co and Sheela Vanessa Kho.

Spicing up this year's tournament is the Taylor Made demo sessions at the driving range where players will test the new line of clubs including the hot-selling XR-03 driver and X-03 iron and the local launch of Golo, an exciting golf dice game.

Proceeds of the event will go to the Sta. Elena employees' tipping fund. Significantly, tipping at Sta. Elena is strictly prohibited as a club policy.

Participating teams must play one morning and an afternoon round either on Thursday/Saturday or Friday/Sunday. The first shotgun start will be at 7 a.m. and the second at 12:30 noon.

Favored to win the low gross plum are former Philippine Sports Commissioner Richie Garcia and Angelo Que.

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Tiger, Daly join 6-way jam

ORLANDO, Florida — Fans didn't have to wander around Bay Hill to find the action - Tiger Woods working magic with his short game in one group, John Daly right behind, booming big drives and avoiding big numbers.

Woods and Daly, two of the biggest attractions on the PGA Tour, wound up in a six-way share of the lead at 5-under 67 after one round of the Bay Hill Invitational on Thursday.

Angel Cabrera, John Huston, Steve Flesch and 48-year-old D.A. Weibring, who got into the tournament on a sponsor's exemption, also shot 67s on a sunny, calm day at Arnold Palmer's course.

Sergio Garcia was among those at 68, while Phil Mickelson, Vijay Singh and Ryder Cup captain Curtis Strange were at 69. Ernie Els, trying to win for the third straight week, bogeyed the 18th and was at 70.

Woods, the two-time defending champion at Bay Hill, is trying to become the first player to win three separate tournaments three times in a row. He already has the hat trick at Firestone and the Memorial. *AP*

Qatar Masters leaders

DOHA, Qatar—Sweden's Klas Eriksson and Joakim Haeggman set the early pace in the Qatar Masters Thursday, each carding a six-under-par 66 to share the lead after the first round of the $1.5 million tournament. Adam Scott, of Australia, Ian Garbutt of England and Soren Hansen of Denmark were on 5-under-par with Colin Montgomerie of Scotland and defending champion Tony Johnstone of Zimbabwe among a group of eight on 4-under. *AP*

Liberica golfest at Malarayat

THE 2002 Liberica Golf Invitational will be held March 16 to 17 at Club Malarayat in Lipa City, according to Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club general manager, architect Antonio Turalba Jr.

Turalba, also the chief operating officer of Active Realty and Development Corp., said the tournament, now on its third year, is expected to draw more participants with over P1 million worth of gifts, awards and prizes at stake.

The sponsors include Taylor-Made, YKK Zippers, Toyota Batangas, Merlo Agri-Vet Corporation and Concrete Ventures. Entry forms have been mailed with the invitations. Members who intend to join are encouraged to register early.

For further inquiries, please call the Pro-Shop at (043) 756-7007.

PSC BACKS WOMEN

Sports commissioner Cynthia L. Carrion (second from right) and Emmeline Verzosa, executive director of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, lead the ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the Info Booth of the National Women's Month 2002 celebration recently at the PhilSports in Pasig City.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

MOTOR SPORTS: 2002 F1 Qualifying - Malaysian Grand Prix at 1 p.m. on Star Sports

BASKETBALL: NBA Inside Stuff at 10:30 a.m. (r – 8 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA - Washington Wizards vs Seattle Supersonics at 11 a.m. (r - 8:30 p.m.) on Star Sports, Utah Jazz vs Charlotte Hornets at 2:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

NBA Jam at 12:30 p.m. on NBN 4

NBA Action at 2 p.m. (r) on ESPN

TENNIS: Pacific Life Open, Early Round Coverage Day #4 at 8 a.m. (r), Men's Quarterfinal Match #1 at 4 p.m. , Match #2 at 6 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: LPGA Ping Banner Health, Second Round at 11 a.m. on ESPN

PGA Bay Hill Invitational, Second Round at 11:30 a.m. on Star Sports

BILLIARDS: 2001 Sudden Death 7-Ball at 8 p.m. on ESPN

SOCCER: UEFA Champions League Group Phase 1, Matchday 4 at 7 a.m. on ESPN

Goals! at 1:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

World Cup Mix at 10 a.m. (r) on Star Sports, 7 p.m. on ESPN

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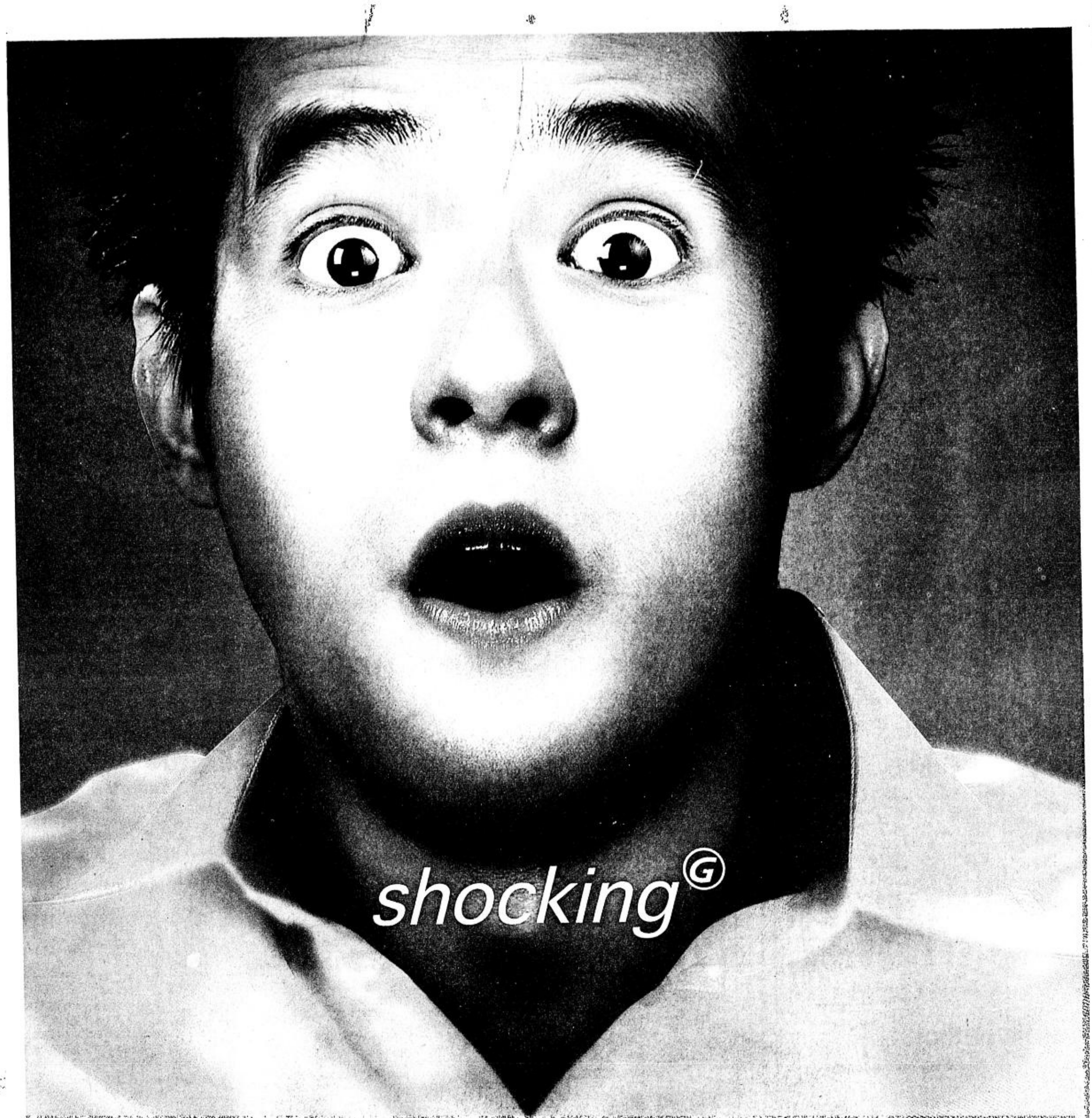

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METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

ROTC slay unsolved after 1 year

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE KILLING of University of Santo Tomas engineering student Mark Chua was exactly one year old yesterday. And the only suspect is in police custody.

The militant youth group Anakbayan pointed this out yesterday as it urged the National Bureau of Investigation to bring to justice Chua's killers.

"There is already a warrant for the arrest of the new set of suspects," Anakbayan UST chair Romulo Yumul said. "However, the case cannot move on if the NBI cannot get hold of these suspects. We urge the NBI to run after these suspects even if they are already out of the country."

Yumul and Chua were complainants in a corruption case they filed against officers of the UST Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC). Chua was murdered after he exposed the corruption. His body, wrapped in a carpet, was found floating in the Pasig River in March 2001. His head was wrapped in packing tape.

Suspect Arnulfo B. Aparri Jr., 20, also a UST student, surrendered to the NBI on Feb. 9 but three other suspects remain at large: Eduardo Tabrilla and Paul Joseph Tan and Michael Von Rainard Manangbao.

Manangbao fled to the United States before the Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 18 issued warrants for their arrest.

The NBI is preparing for the extradition of Manangbao from the United States.

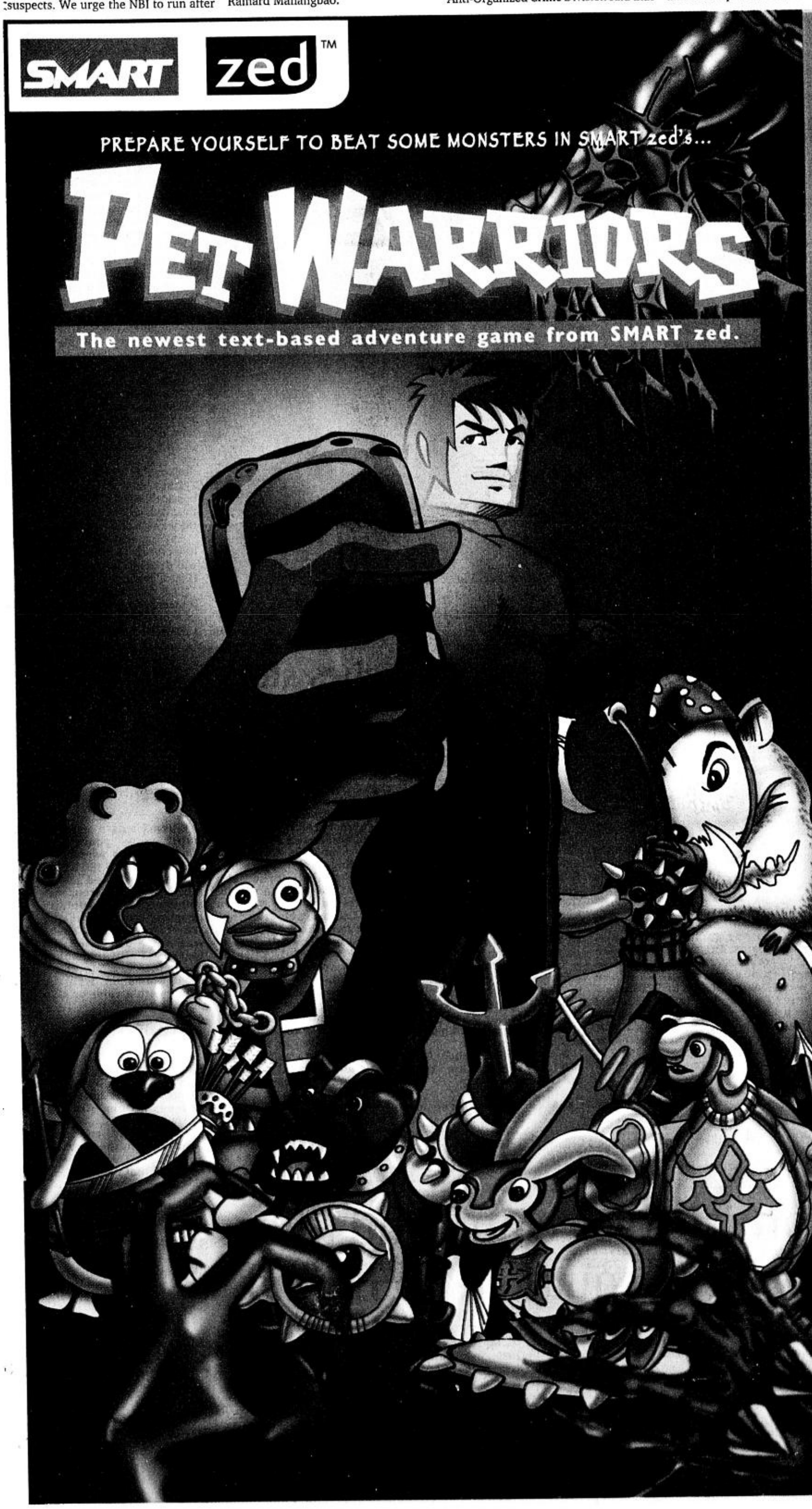
"To be able to render justice for Mark, all of those who are involved in his murder, directly or indirectly, should be punished by law," said Anakbayan vice chair Eleanor de Guzman. "It is imperative that the NBI catch the big fish, the mastermind in Mark's murder."

Agent Primitivo Najera of the NBI Anti-Organized Crime Division said that according to four witnesses, Aparri was one of those present while the suspects were wrapping Chua's body in the UST ROTC office on the night of March 15, 2001.

UST students were scheduled to hold a Mass and a candle lighting ceremony at UST yesterday afternoon.

"It is our duty and responsibility to uphold justice for Mark," Yumul said.

"We should remain vigilant in fighting against corruption inside the ROTC," he added. "The students' call for the abolition of the ROTC and for the end of the culture of corruption and violence on our campus remains significant and valid up to this date."



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More killings to come, say vigilantes

Senator condemns latest summary execution in Manila

By Philip Tubeza and Rocky Nazareno

A MANILA police official yesterday said that a man who identified himself as the leader of a vigilante group responsible for the death of petty criminals in the city's tourist district, warned of more killings if attacks on tourists continue.

Supt. Manolo Martinez, Ermita police station chief, said the man introduced himself as "Ka Benny, a former Army soldier."

"He said he was concerned that, with rallies going on daily, these crimes involving tourists would add more woes to the government," Martinez told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday.

He said the alleged vigilante leader called him up last week after the first "salvaging" victim was found outside Robinson's Place mall in Ermita, Manila.

"His voice was mature," Martinez said of Ka Benny. "But of course, we should take all his claims at face value, unless there is evidence (that he is not what he claims to be). Maybe he is just riding on the issue."

While Martinez expressed his doubts on "Ka Benny," he said he warned the alleged vigilante leader to stop the killings.

"I told (Ka Benny) that he must not wait for the time when we become enemies," Martinez said after the three murders. "I said we, the WPD, do not condone, but rather condemn extra-judicial killings."

Martinez said when he asked the man for his phone number, the alleged former Army man "just laughed."

Three men have been summarily executed in Manila. The victims were alleged criminals who preyed on tourists.

"Based on the feedback I got from (the WPD's Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit), the two latest victims had criminal records," Martinez said.

Uri Lalic, 16, a driver, of Valencia Street, Sta. Mesa, Manila, and Ramon A. Artigas, 26, of San Sebastian Street, Recto Avenue, Quiapo, Manila, were found dead near a hotel in Malate on Tuesday night.

Police said their bodies bore "strangulation marks and puncture wounds."

Police have also identified the first "salvage" victim whose body was dumped outside Robinson's Place.

Detective Raul Olavario, of the WPD homicide section, said the murdered man was Silverio O. Amoyan, 32, of Block 11, Lot 5 Garden Village, Pulang Buhangin, Sta. Monica, Bulacan.

His sister Maribel stepped up to identify him after she heard of his death in the news, Olavario said.

"She admitted he was a Batang City Jail (BCJ) member," Olavario added. "But of course, he should have not have been killed just like that."

He said Maribel last saw her brother alive on the second week of February. He had just gotten out of prison.

Martinez said his men had information that the victim stayed in Intramuros before he was killed.

The execution of petty criminals by suspected vigilantes drew a strong reaction from Sen. Noli de Castro, who has asked the Philippine National Police to put a stop to the atrocities in Manila's tourist belt.

De Castro called on PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza and Western Police District director Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos "to immediately get to work, arrest the perpetrators and put a stop to the reckless disregard for human life by these self-styled vigilantes."

The chairman of the Senate committee on tourism pointed out that the killings are happening right in the heart of Ermita, "at a critical time when we are trying very hard to encourage tourists to come visit our country."

But news of the vigilantes' activities have not deterred members of the Ativan Gang from striking again in what has become their favorite hunting ground—historic Intramuros.

This time, a 22-year-old Swedish seminarian fell prey to the culprits' cunning.

Tourist David John Edman, who is currently staying at St. Andrew's Theological Seminary on E. Rodriguez Extension Road, Quezon City, fell to the wiles of two unidentified women and an unidentified man on Monday, SPO4 Cecillo T. Sacorum said in his report to the WPD's General Assignment Section.

The seminarian lost his Visa Card and P8,000 to the suspected members of the Ativan Gang, who befriend their victims before drugging and robbing them.

Sacorum said the three culprits approached Edman and befriended him about 2:30 a.m. in the walled city of Intramuros.

The seminarian agreed to join them when the culprits invited him to go on a tour of Manila's popular places.

Edman said they first went to SM Manila and then they walked to Quiapo.

Later, the culprits convinced Edman to go to their house where the four of them had a drink.

Environment groups hit garbage firm

By Alcuin Papa

ENVIRONMENT and civil groups protesting the P390-billion overpricing of the Jancom garbage deal with the government denied yesterday they were aligned with Jancom's rival company, Pro-Environment.

Ana Ugarte of Bantay Kalikasan told reporters yesterday that her group had no links with Pro-Environment.

"We are definitely not connected with Pro-Environment," Ugarte stressed. "We have been fighting Jancom since 1994."

She added her group was only "responding to violations of the country's laws," particularly the Clean Air Act.

This law banned the use of incinerators, which is one of the technologies Jancom proposed to use, she said.

Ugarte said the country is being held hostage by the deal.

"It is one-sided and disadvantageous," she said. "Even if the Clean Air Act were to be amended to allow incineration, it would still be disadvantageous because of the lack of terms of reference and the high tipping fees."

Her group also circulated a statement yesterday calling the deal "the greatest rip-off in our country's history," and that Jancom is "a monster of greed and deception that has broken a number of laws and corrupted an endless list of government offices and officials."

"We deplore this brazen violation of the laws of our land for economic gain of a select few," the statement said. "We deplore the manipulation of the Philippine legal system to benefit foreign private interests at the expense of the majority of the Filipino people—this generation and the next."

She added her group, as well as others protesting the deal, found no less than 19 violations of different laws in the contract.

"We need to investigate the source of all this and trace (the deal) back," Ugarte explained.

Last January, the Supreme Court upheld the validity of Jancom's contract with government after a protracted legal battle.

Environment and civil groups have protested the decision saying it will defraud the government of P390 billion.

The contract has yet to be implemented because it still needs the signature of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

American sues Pinoy wife for selling their baby

By Christian V. Esguerra

AN AMERICAN has accused his Filipino wife of turning him into a "stud" to produce Amerasian babies "for her to sell."

American businessman Charles Berger has already sued his Filipino wife Cristina for allegedly selling their child for P100,000 to the woman's new partner.

"Cristina has destroyed me as a human being," Berger said in his four-page affidavit. "She has taken away from me my pride, my dignity, my honor, and reduced me to a dog, working in a stud farm, producing (American-Filipino) babies for her to sell."

Berger, 57, accused his wife Cristina, 26, of selling their baby to one Richard Valencia.

Cristina and Valencia are facing child trafficking charges before the Quezon City prosecutor's office.

Berger said he and Cristina met in early 2000 and were married on Aug. 8 that same year.

Two months before the marriage, Cristina, thinking she was pregnant with Berger, allegedly told the complainant she would leave him soon.

Berger said Cristina told him she could sell the Fil-American baby and "make a lot of money."

But as it turned out, Cristina was not pregnant at the time, he said.

Throughout their relationship, the complainant said his wife would usually disappear for weeks without any explanation, and return to him only to ask for money.

On Feb. 8, 2001, Berger said Cristina left him for good after a heated argument.

The complainant said he was later told by a relative of Cristina that she was three months pregnant and had married Valencia.

Berger said he is convinced the child is his, especially when he found out that Cristina had been bragging about her American-Filipino baby.

On July 29, the complainant said he got a copy of "Consent to Adopt," supposedly showing that Cristina had their baby adopted by Valencia for P100,000.

BE MY BABY

Candidates to the Binibining Pilipinas go on a charity jaunt for children at the Fiesta Carnival in Cubao, Quezon City. DENNIS SABANGAN

2 men killed in Antipolo shootout

By Nelson Flores

TWO MEN were killed while two others, including a police officer, were wounded when suspected robbers engaged the lawmen in a shootout in Antipolo City early Thursday morning.

Police also announced the arrest of 7 suspects.

Edgar Murillo, of Baybay Sapa, Barangay Mayamot, Antipolo City, and said to be the leader of a gang of bank robbers, was killed in the shootout police said.

The other fatality was said to be Murillo's companion who remained unidentified, according to police.

Police found two .45-caliber pistols, a .38-caliber homemade revolver and assorted ammunitions from Murillo and his slain companion.

The wounded were identified as Senior Insp. Allan Campos, of the National Capital Regional Office based in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig; and Jose Petalbo, Murillo's other companion.

Campos is reported to be in serious condition at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City.

Police said Petalbo was taken to the Amang Rodriguez Medical Center in Marikina City also due to multiple gunshot wounds.

Police identified those arrested as Reynaldo Misa, Michael Aquino, Apolinar Anda, Rodel Teves, Wilfredo Aquino, Marvyn Batigan and Alex Coyuca. All seven are said to be members of the Waray-Waray Gang.

Investigation showed that the incident happened shortly after midnight in front of Murillo's residence.

Police said two teams of NCRPO intelligence men under Supt. Bayani Dileria served a warrant of arrest issued against Murillo by Marikina City Regional Trial Court Judge Alice Gutierrez.

But instead of surrendering, the suspects opened fire and hit Campos, prompting the lawmen to return fire.

Ramon Ang a rags-to-riches story

RAMON Ang, vice chair, president and chief operating officer (COO) of San Miguel Corp.—all rolled into one—has gone a long, long way since his days as an auto mechanic.

But despite his lofty position in the country's biggest business conglomerate, he's still as humble as in those days when he was repairing cars. He still addresses "sir" and "ma'm" everybody he meets for the first time, including beat policemen.

How did Ang get to where he is now? Here's the story as pieced together by this writer from people who know Ang very well.

* * *

Serendipity is the word to describe his luck.

Business tycoon Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco was looking for a mechanic many years ago to repair a luxury sports car that bogged down.

The mechanics in the shop where Cojuangco took multimillion-peso car repairs couldn't diagnose the car's defect. The businessman was blowing his top.

* * *

At that time, Ang was in the shop having his rundown car checked.

A very friendly guy, Ang approached the angry businessman and asked if he could take a look at the car's engine. An expert mechanic, Ang told the business magnate what the car's defect was.

Right there and then, Cojuangco hired Ang as the official mechanic of all his cars. Cojuangco is a collector of rare, expensive and luxury cars.

* * *

When Danding Cojuangco went on exile with ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos, Ang took good care not only of his employer's cars but his house and other property.

Cojuangco also entrusted to Ang some of his investments. Ang not only took care of those investments, he also made them grow. When Danding came back from exile, Ang handed back to the billionaire businessman all the things and property that Cojuangco had entrusted to him.

By this time, Cojuangco's trust in Ang was complete.

* * *

Ang, whose father owned a car repair shop, is a dropout from the Far Eastern University.

What's the moral of the Ramon Ang story? It pays to be an honest, trustworthy employee.

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

* * *

Corporal punishment or inflicting bodily harm on a pupil by his teacher is absolutely forbidden. The rationale behind this is that a kind word of advice is much more effective on a misbehaving child than a whipping rod.

The saying "spare the rod and spoil the child" is now looked upon with contempt especially under our present laws. That's why laws against child abuse have been passed by Congress.

But there are teachers who still think that they are above the law and morality.

* * *

One such teacher is Edgardo Canonse, a Grade 5 mentor at the Pio del Pilar Elementary School on General Luna Street, Makati City.

Canonse not only inflicted physical punishment on 11-year-old Arjae Noguera, a Grade 5 pupil of that school, he also humiliated the boy in front of his schoolmates.

What did Noguera do to merit Canonse's ire?

* * *

The boy was caught by another teacher, Arlene Bragais, wearing his shirt improperly. Noguera, because of the heat, rolled his shirt up to his chest as some boys are wont to do.

Leading the boy by pulling his ear, Bragais turned him over to Canonse who was inside his classroom. Noguera is not Canonse's class adviser. At the time the boy's teacher was cooking pancit for the school principal, Elita T. Lopez, who was celebrating her birthday.

You know what Canonse did to the boy? He made Noguera crawl on all fours and bark like a dog. And then he kicked the boy on the thigh while the child was crawling! Up to now two weeks after he was kicked, the bruise is still there.

* * *

Canonse's cruelty to Arjae was seen by other pupils as it was class hours.

That teacher is lucky Arjae's father, a delivery man, is coolheaded.

If Arjae were my child, I would have broken every bone in Canonse's body. Or I would have twisted the bastard's arm to force him to come with me to the National Mental Hospital so he could receive psychiatric treatment.

* * *

When I was a Grade 1 pupil many years ago (don't ask me when that was because I'll tell a lie), my teacher hated me so much for no apparent reason except that I couldn't keep my mouth shut and stay in one place. There was not a day when the teacher—I still remember her name, Mrs. Moreno—did not pinch me, whip my hands with a ruler or slap my face.

I grew up fearing teachers. Later, when I was in high school and college, I viewed some of them with contempt. I didn't know it then but I was suffering the effects of my traumatic experience with my Grade 1 teacher.

It took many years and some visits to the psychiatrist before I was able to get rid of that trauma.

GMA promise to give out land titles draws horde of squatters to Bilibid

By Christian V. Esguerra

SQUATTERS at the New Bilibid Prisons compound are liable to lose that rare chance of owning the land they are occupying for many years.

Over 100 new squatters have moved into the compound since President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that she would award land titles to informal settlers in the area, according to residents.

"They are taking advantage of the President's announcement," an oldtimer told the INQUIRER. "We fear property intended for legitimate residents will be given to the newcomers."

In a visit to Muntinlupa last month, Ms Arroyo announced the government will provide low-cost houses to around 1,000 squatters in Pasong Diablo in West Kabulusan, Alabang.

The housing program is part of the national government's plan to privatize the NBP property and to transfer the NBP to Taytay in Rizal.

In a letter to Ms Arroyo, Rep. Ruffy Biazon had asked Malacañang to secure the 55-hectare NBP property following reports that "professional" squatters had taken over the area.

The lawmaker also warned prison officials might be making money out of the housing program by dividing the property and collecting fees from the newcomers.

Supt. Catalino Malinao, NBP deputy director, yesterday said he had been receiving reports that the new settlers pay P200 in membership fee and P30 in monthly rent.

Prison officials, he said, are currently holding dialogues with the newly arrived squatters to convince them to leave the NBP compound soon.

The NBP is also looking into the voters' registration of residents to determine who among them had just arrived in the area.

MSA bares summer program

THE SUMMER program of the MSA Academic Advancement Institute begins on March 18 and ends on May 18, the school announced.

The summer program is designed for all levels, pre-school to college, and offers courses in math, science and reading. Training classes for math competition will also be conducted.

The program also includes workshops in creative arts like drama and theater, art appreciation classes for children, and classes in music and creative writing.

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7 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2	BIBINGKA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2	BIBINGKA
3	EVA
4 (SDDS)	D-TOX
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8	ESKANDALOSA
9	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX
6	BIBINGKA
7 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8	ESKANDALOSA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	RESERVE
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
4	BIBINGKA
5 (SDDS)	D-TOX

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	BIBINGKA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1	BIBINGKA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	EVA
Lords	EVA
Jennet	RESERVE

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	EVA

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3	RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	EVA
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	BIBINGKA

New Divisoria Mall
DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	RESERVE
4	RESERVE
5	RESERVE
6	RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	

Berma
tel 879.2029

1	EVA
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS
3 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	D-TOX

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	LORD OF THE RINGS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
2	ALI
3 (DOLBY)	SHALLOW HAL
4 (DTS)	RIDING IN CAR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ACCIDENTAL SPY
2	BIBINGKA
3	EVA
4 (DTS)	EARTHQUAKE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	D-TOX
4	ESKANDALOSA
5	LORD OF THE RINGS

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1	D-TOX
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	ESKANDALOSA

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1	VANILLA SKY
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	HINOG SA PILIT

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1	THE OTHERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)	RESERVE
2 (DTS)	ESKANDALOSA

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1	RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

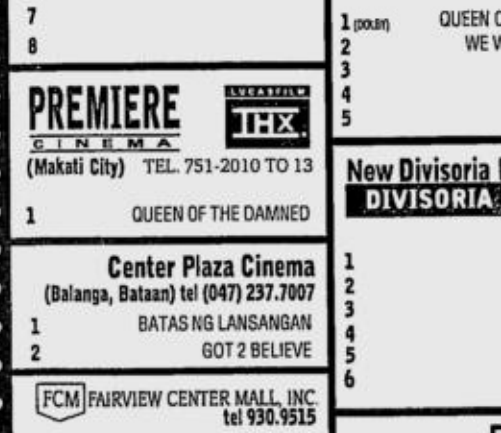
1	RAT RACE
2	13 GHOSTS
3	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4	ESKANDALOSA

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	ALI
4	13 GHOSTS

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS



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633- 7641 loc. 279

1 THX	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	D-TOX
4	BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
7	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
10	THE SHIPPING NEWS

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	THE SHIPPING NEWS
3	D-TOX
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS

Metro East -
Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1	D-TOX
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	SHIPPING NEWS
4	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	SHALLOW HAL

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

1	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	D-TOX
6	WE WERE SOLDIERS
7	THE SHIPPING NEWS
8	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	BIBINGKA
3	D-TOX
4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
5	EVA, LASON KAY ADAN
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459

1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2	SHALLOW HAL
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	13 GHOSTS
5	MARSHALL DICK
6	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

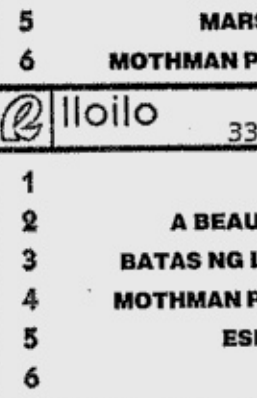
Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78

1	13 GHOSTS
2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5	ESKANDALOSA
6	ALI

Star Mills-
Sn Fernando, Pamp 875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

1	ESKANDALOSA
2	ALI
3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
4	IKAW LAMANG
5	13 GHOSTS
6	13 GHOSTS

malabon citisquare-
soon to open.



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THE MULTIMILLION-PESO project hopefully will prevent scenes like this in future rainy seasons. FILE PHOTO ERIK ARAZAS

P488M flood control project completed

By Gerald Lacuarta

WITH THE summer heat just setting in and the rainy season still several months away, the government has completed the Japanese-funded rehabilitation of a flood control and warning system in Metro Manila, which is expected to minimize if not totally prevent the loss of lives and property during floods.

The Embassy of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency on Thursday turned over to the Philippine government the rehabilitated Effective Flood Control Operation and Warning System (FCOS) in Metro Manila, which will enable the Department of Public Works and Highways to monitor flood conditions rapidly and correctly.

The EFCOS is meant to establish effective flood control and warning systems at the Manggahan Floodway and the Napindan Hydraulic Control Structure, as a continuation of the Nationwide Flood Control Dredging Project in the Pasig-Marikina-Laguna Lake Complex.

Japanese Ambassador Yoshihisa Ara said that with the rehabilitation of the EFCOS, flood damages in the downstream reaches would be diminished through the establishment of rainfall, telemetering and water level gauging systems.

Ara formally turned over the project to Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong at the DPWH Rosario Master Control Station in Pasig City.

"The improvement of our hydrological observation network will mean accurate monitoring of rain area and rainfall depth," Datumanong said. "Thus, more time allowance can be gained for emergency preparedness to mitigate flood damage."

The P488-milion EFCOS was funded under Japan's grant aid assistance program with P77 million coming from the Philippine government. It was designed by the CTI Engineering International Co. Ltd.

The improvements included upgrade from analog to digital communications, and addition of monitoring stations, multiplex communication equipment and a radio system.

Malacañang neighborhood a model in handling waste

By Joey C. Papa and Ana Ver-Papa
Contributors

IN THE President's official backyard and neighborhood, ecology models in waste reduction, segregation, recycling and composting are being set up by the Malacañang Eco-waste Office, the Save Mother Earth Committee, the Presidential Security Group (PSG), Malacañang barangays and the offices just outside the Palace gates, in cooperation with non-government zero waste groups.

The ecologically inspired teams joined forces immediately after the approval of the implementing rules and regulations (IRRs) of the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act or Republic Act No. 9003.

The lead personalities pushing for these eco-models around Malacañang are a lively team, mostly of women. They are Priscilla Teehankee Gamboa, Lynn Danao Moreno, Teresita Mendoza, Clarita Rodulfo, Maila Ordoñez, Cecille Sampol, Gloria Bundoc, and the members of the PSG Ladies' Club led by Dr. Lorna Esperon.

The story will not be complete, however, without the contributions of the men leaders — Edgardo Torres, William Enriquez and Marianito Andal, Major Chito Silbol of the PSG and members of Gamboa's staff, Evan Eleazar and Rey Naranja.

Malacañang's neighbors from barangays Malbar A and B are represented by barangay chairs Precy Asuncion (Barahgay 643, San Miguel) and Nida Balolong (Barangay 830, Otis, Pandacan).

The group has met a number of times to get trained in ecological solid waste and resource management, with the help of the Zero Waste Recycling Movement of the Philippines Foundation Inc.(ZWRMPFI), led by its current president, Dr. Metodio Palaypay.

A Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) is nearing completion near the Malacañang engineering office in Nagtahan, at the corner of Otis and Jesus streets. The PSG has cleared an area for a temporary eco-garden to allow the immediate composting of biodegradable wastes.

Also, the Malacañang Employees Coop (Mecoop) has become a zero waste convert and practitioner. It is now actively segregating its wastes and is no longer using styrofoam.

The group has been conducting eco-tours so the members can see for themselves how the existing ecology centers in Metro Manila are being run. The most recent tour included representatives from La Consolacion College, one of the four major schools in the area, together with the barangay captains, a Greenpeace member, and a visitor from Belgium.

The other major schools in the area are San Beda, Holy Spirit, and Centro Escolar.

The eco-tour itinerary usually starts with a visit to Tondo's Pier 18, better known as the site of Smokey Mountain. The positive side of Smokey Mountain is Fr. Benigno Beltran's Materials Recovery Facility, which also has a livelihood program for the poor in the area.

Composting

Another stop is Talayan Village in Quezon City. Talayan Village has the spacious Talayan Village park, which allows for the processing of the community's biodegradable waste. The waste materials collected from the residents in the morning are buried in a one-meter-deep furrow and covered with soil for composting, with the help of sunlight, water, wind, and microbes.

Several furrows run parallel to each other. Beside them is a wide garden of vegetables, herbals and ornamentals.

In another area is a shed for non-biodegradable items to be sold or recycled, while within an office building in the village is a portion for handicrafts that make use of used juice containers, plastics, paper, and the like.

Barangay Barangka Itaas in Mandaluyong City is an example of a community with very little open space but with a well-run eco-center. Composting is done largely with the use of pots.

Barangay New Era along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City is another must destination for the group's eco-tour. Since the University of the Philippines campus is nearby, the Malacañang eco trourists also visit its eco-center when they have the time.

Encouragement

The ecological engagement of the Malacañang community should encourage other government agencies to start their own eco-waste and resource management system, or expand what they have started.

The Department of Agrarian Reform is one of the offices that have been conducting eco-waste management seminars and, in fact, has scheduled one of these seminars, as part of its Women's Month activities.

The National Food Authority has been actively promoting zero waste and resource management.

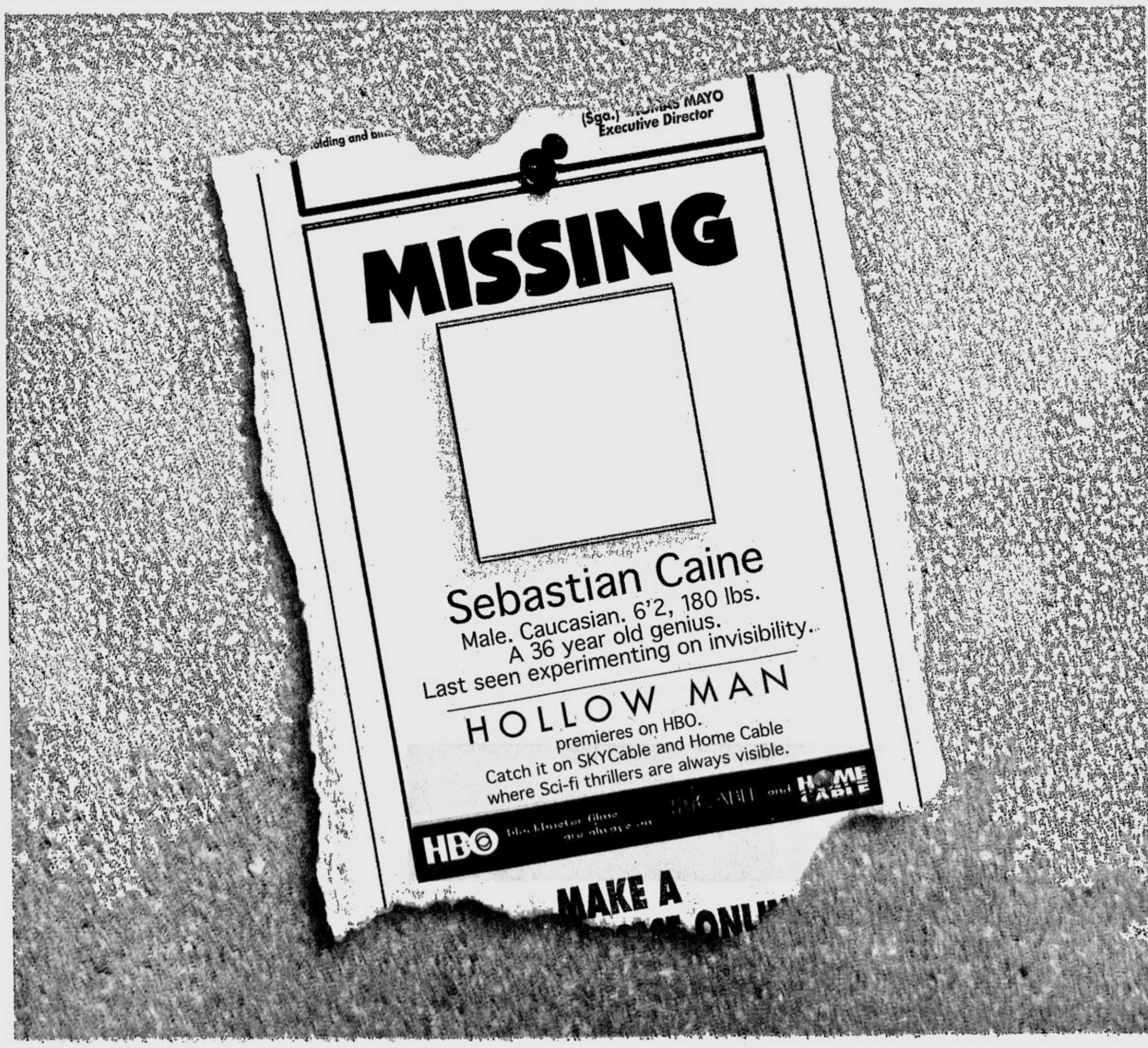
The General Services Division of the National Housing Authority is convening key officers for an eco-waste orientation seminar.

It is significant to note that these three government agencies play a key role in ensuring equitable resource distribution, food security, and national shelter, all of which are critically dependent on ecological resource use.

The local government units and the barangays, however, should be at the forefront of the action in eco-waste management. Section 10 of RA No. 9003 states that "Segregation and collection of solid waste shall be conducted at the barangay level specifically for biodegradable, compostable, and reusable wastes. . . "

The community around Malacañang is committed to join the barangays at the forefront of the nationwide ecological renewal.

(The authors may be reached at bangon_kalikasan@skyinet.net).



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Pusong Pinoy

PETRON

Ban VIP rooms in nightspots, dad proposes

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA councilor has proposed that city nightspots be banned from setting up or maintaining private rooms, commonly called VIP rooms.

The proposal of Councilor Isko Moreno of the city's 1st district covers karaoke and KTV bars and sauna baths.

VIP rooms are one of the main sources of income for many establishments in the city's red light district. Wealthy patrons often rent VIP rooms where they can be "privately entertained" by guest relations officers (GROs) or sauna attendants.

"What happens inside VIP rooms is common knowledge," Moreno said. "We'll never be actually certain but whoever are inside are surely not playing jackstone."

The councilor, who is also an actor, said all customers of an entertainment spot should be served in the same common area and with the same standards. He said there should be no private rooms for exclusive entertainment or recreational purposes.

This way, allegations that clubs are acting as prostitution fronts would be avoided, he said.

If Moreno's proposal is passed into law, owners and operators of nightspots that maintain VIP rooms will be fined P3,000 and jailed for six months for the first offense. Second-time offenders will be fined P5,000 and jailed for a year.

Moreno's bill was forwarded to the city council's committees on games and amusement and on laws during last Thursday's session. The sectors affected by the proposal are expected to be summoned to the council's public hearings.

Some councilors were quick to point out that the proposed measure would not necessarily stop prostitution. They said that although a club's income would surely suffer without VIP rooms, patrons could still take GROs out of the nightspots after paying bar fines.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMMED
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	D - TOX
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	SHIPPING NEWS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	BIBINGKA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-2	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	D TOX
CINEMA-12	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BEAUTIFUL MIND

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

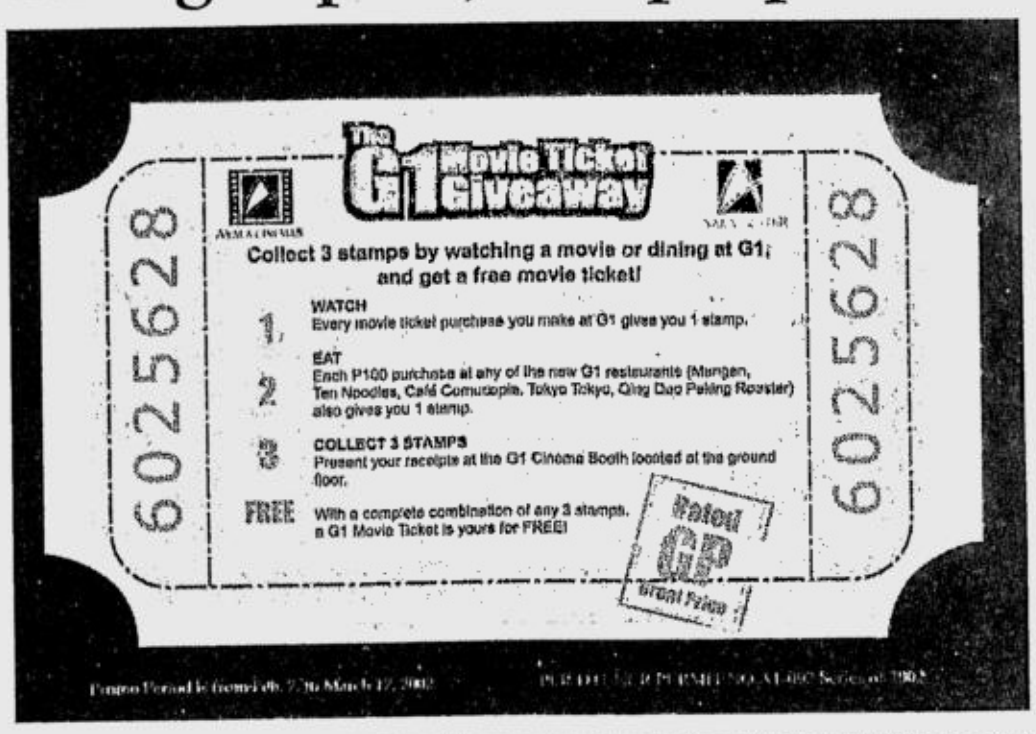
CINEMA-1	D-TOX
CINEMA-2	ROYAL TENENBAUMS
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-5	SHIPPING NEWS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

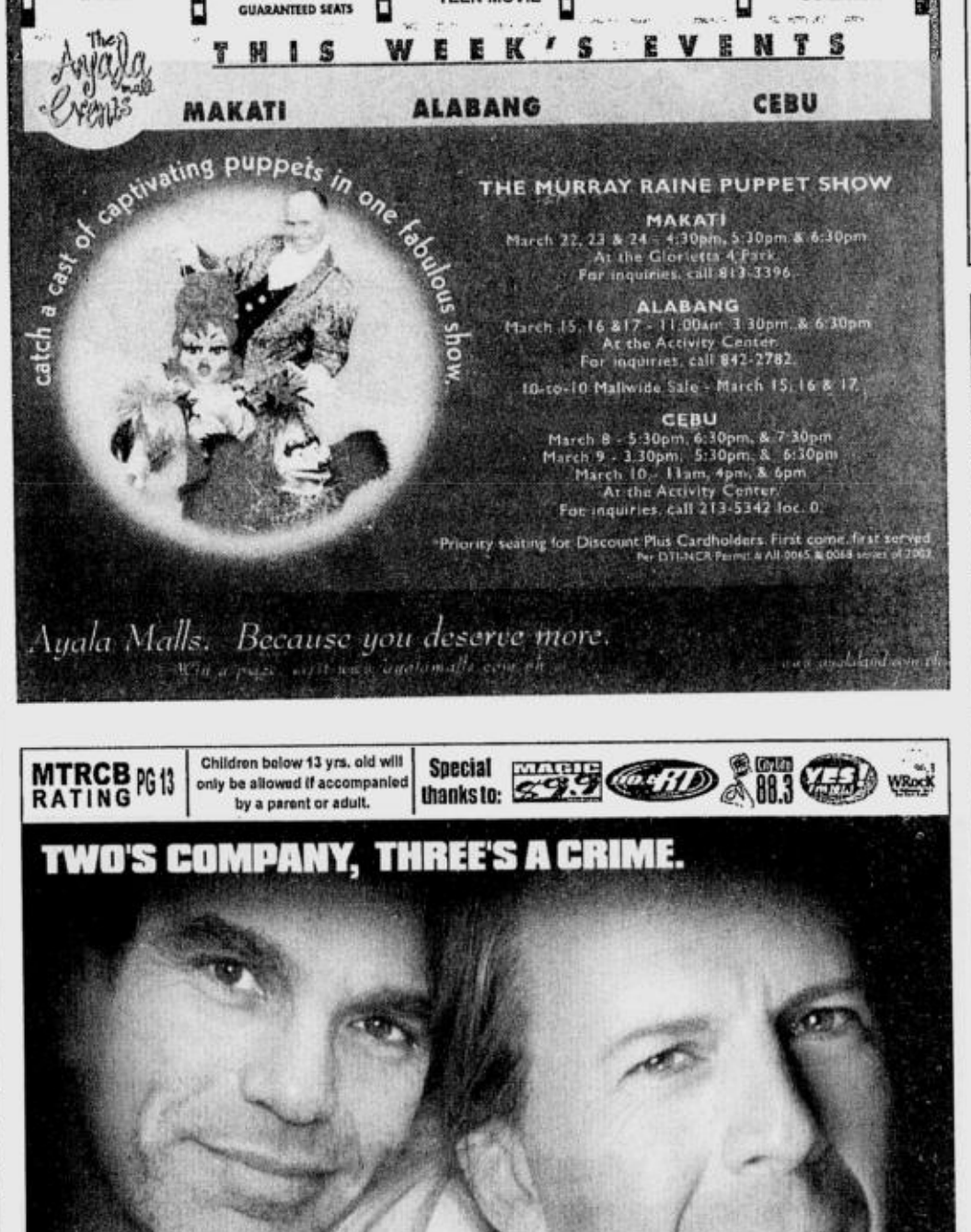
UNIWIDE METROMALL

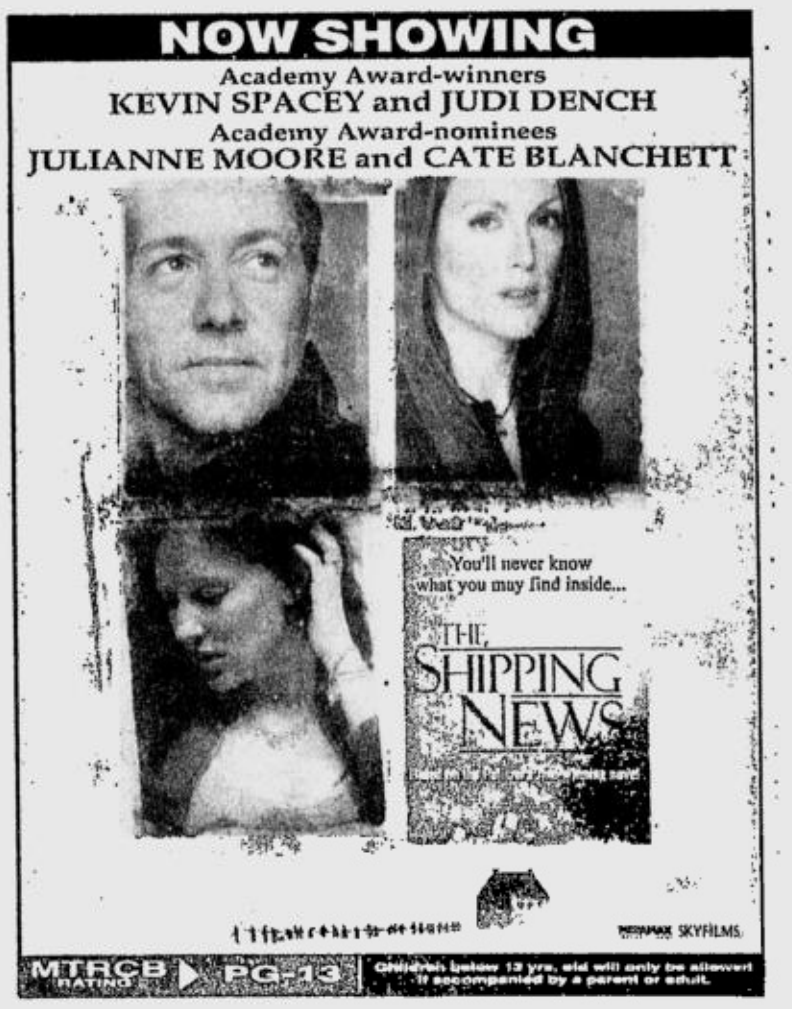
(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

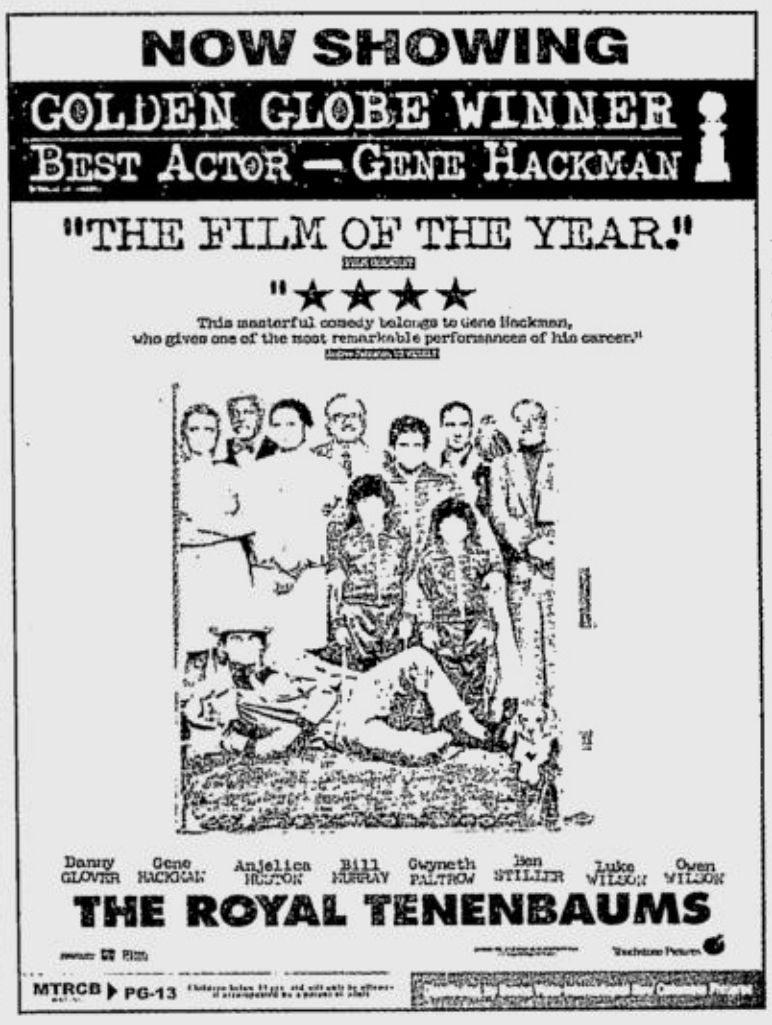
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

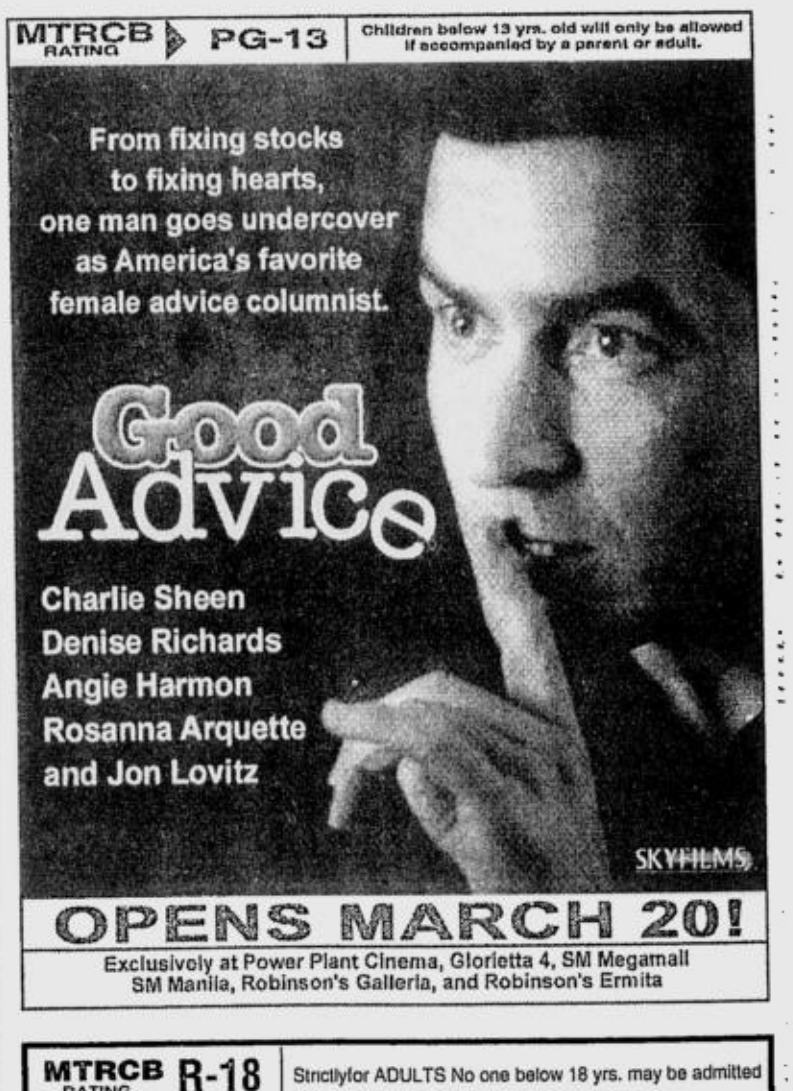
(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID











Fire in Quezon City

ABOUT P3 million worth of properties went up in smoke when fire broke out in a condominium unit in Quezon City yesterday morning.

But no one was reported injured in the blaze that razed the Eagleville Condominim at the corner of P. Tuazon and St. Peter streets in Barangay Kaunlaran, Quezon City, investigators said.

QC fire marshal Chief Insp. Oscar Villegas said the fire started about 10:45 a.m. at the Mac's Frame Shop, owned by Machael Chan, on the fourth floor of the building.

The fire was believed to have started when welding materials landed on a can of paint, investigators said. ***Agnes E. Donato***

'Martir' in Manila

THE TIMELESS *senakulo* (passion play) is given a contemporary twist in "Ang Martir Sa Golgota," which weaves the life and passion of Jesus Christ in a three-hour play and intertwines it with current Philippine issues.

Featuring the talented residents of the 6th District of Manila, the play based on the gospel of St. Matthew will be staged on March 27, 8 p.m., at the Plaza Hugo Basketball Court in Sta. Ana, Manila.

Movie and stage actors are also featured in cameo appearances.

Admission is free and open to the general public. Performances are also lined up in Plaza Miranda, Remedios Circle and in Sampaloc during the long Holy Week break.

Now on its foruth season, "Ang Martir Sa Golgota" is a yearly presentation of the office of councilor Luciano "Lou" M. Veloso and the Mobile Theater Foundation (Manila) Inc., in cooperation with Tanghalang Santa Ana.

Lim can't accept defeat, says Atienza lawyer

Mayor could still be kicked out, says Lim camp

By Jerome Aning

THE ELECTION protest filed against Mayor Lito Atienza by his archrival former Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim is doomed even if the Commission on Elections-National Capital Region has recommended Atienza's disqualification from office for alleged violations of the election code, according to the mayor's election lawyer.

But Lim's lawyers insisted yesterday that Atienza could be kicked from his post for violating the election law.

In a press statement, lawyer Romulo Makalintal, said Lim's case had been rendered "moot and academic" after Atienza was proclaimed winner in the May 2000 polls.

Lim, who ran against Atienza, revealed in a forum last Monday that the Comelec has recommended Atienza's disqualification.

Speaking for Atienza, who is on an official visit to Shanghai, China with other Metro Manila mayors, Makalintal described Lim's revelation as a "smokescreen to hide the fact that the election protest filed against my client is doomed."

He said it was "an act of desperation resorted (to) by someone who cannot accept defeat."

Lim's lawyers Amando Tetangco and

LIM

ATIENZA

Renato dela Cruz countered that it is the Atienza camp that is putting up a smokescreen because the mayor has been exposed and is in danger of losing his post.

Under existing jurisprudence, a candidate cannot be disqualified anymore if he or she has already been proclaimed, according to Makalintal.

Tetangco and Dela Cruz, however, argued that this principle is applicable only if the winning candidate violated the rules on qualification, such as those referring to age, citizenship or registration as a voter.

"In Mr. Atienza's case, he violated a provision of the Omnibus Election Code which expressly prohibits the use of public funds in electioneering," Dela Cruz told reporters in a press conference at the Manila Diamond Hotel.

Comelec-NCR directors Ferdinand Rafanan and Esmeralda Amora-Ladra earlier recommended the annulment of Atienza's proclamation and his investigation after finding merit in a complaint filed against Atienza for allegedly campaigning prematurely and buying votes using government funds between Feb. 19 and March 29, 2001.

Tetangco claimed that upon Atienza's instructions the city government disbursed some P2.3 million in separate occasions for several activities designed to promote his candidacy.

But Makalintal said they are not aware of any Comelec recommendation, adding that, if there had been one, "it should have remained confidential."

Atienza claimed that his acts were part of his "constant consultation and liaison" with his constituents and the expenses were "necessary to address the pressing, relevant problems and needs of the community."

Makalintal also said that even the election protest Lim had filed with the Comelec, which is different from the disqualification case, has lost steam.

Lim had asked Comelec for the recounting of votes in certain precincts in all the six districts of Manila, Makalintal said. But the revision of ballots in certain precincts in the first, second and fifth districts resulted in an increase in the number of Atienza's votes, Makalintal said. Lim, he said, did not recover any votes.

"This is why Mr. Lim's lawyers made a formal manifestation early this month that they are not anymore pursuing the revision of ballots in the remaining districts," he said.

Makalintal also revealed that the Comelec even sent a formal communication dated March 7, 2002, informing Atienza that it has granted Lim's manifestation and queried whether Atienza is still interested in pursuing his counter-protest.

Special cell for inmates with TB

By Nelson Flores

TWENTY-NINE out of 309 inmates of the Mandaluyong City jail were found suffering from tuberculosis, a highly communicable infectious disease, during the city medical hospital's annual medical check-up on the prisoners.

This has prompted Mandaluyong Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. to order the construction of a special cell for these inmates and other prisoners who are afflicted with other communicable diseases.

Abalos said this would prevent the spread of contagious disease among the inmates.

"We need to protect the healthy inamtes and provide medical attention to those found positive of the TB virus," Abalos said.

He said the city health office has started giving initial medications to the TB patients.

"We will do all necessary actions to ensure that our inmates are given proper medical attention. The families of the detainees are assured that their detained relatives would be treated fairly and humanely in our jail," Abalos said.

The city health office would also conduct other tests to determine if the inmates are suffering from other disease, he said.

City Health Officer Teresita Lim said city health officers would separate the sick inmates from the healthy ones until the special facility is constructed.

City Eng. Conrado Anciado said his people are already looking for a suitable site for the special facility.

"But certainly, the facility will still be within the City Jail premises which is located at the fourth floor of our city police station building," Anciado said.

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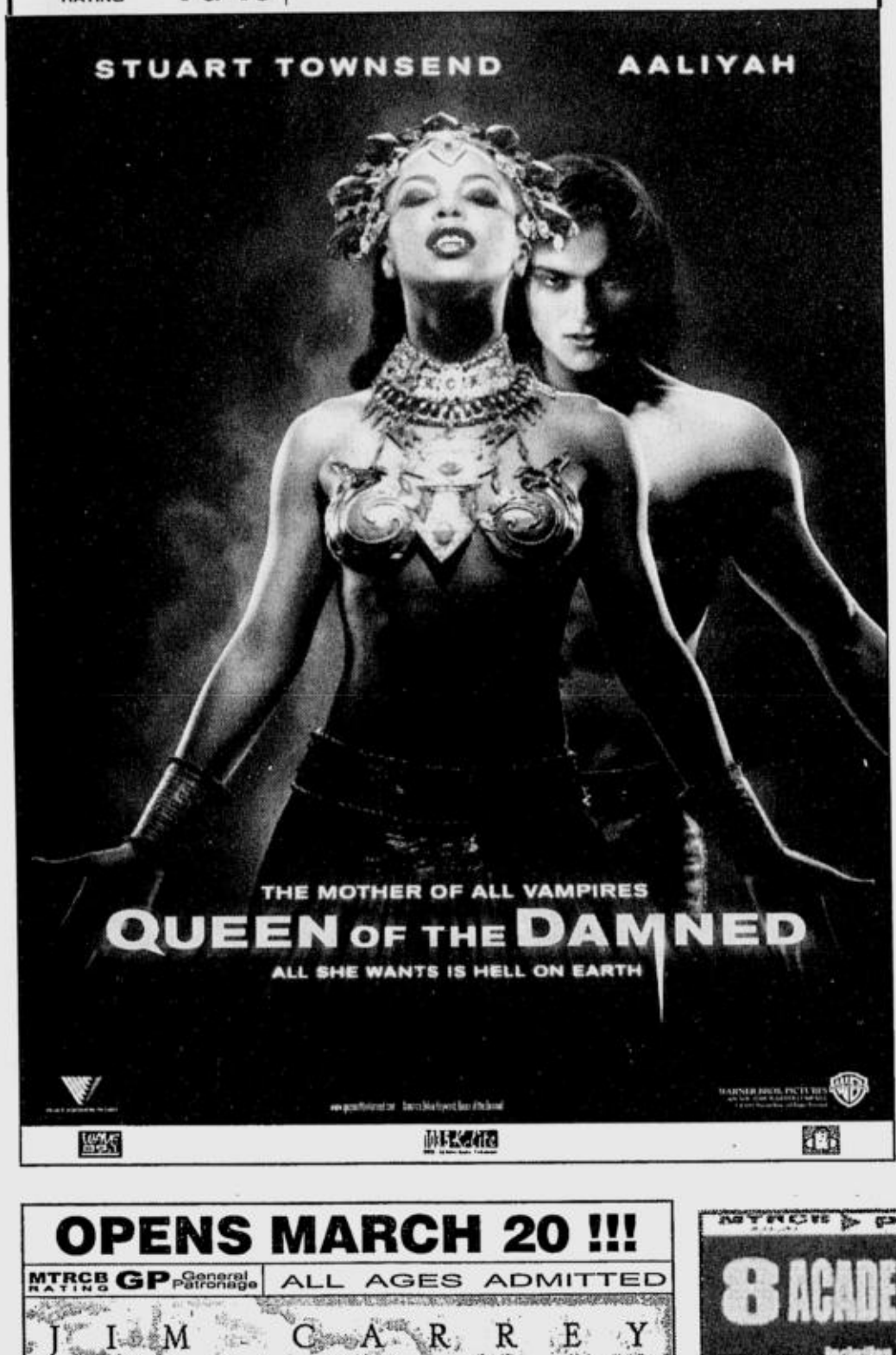

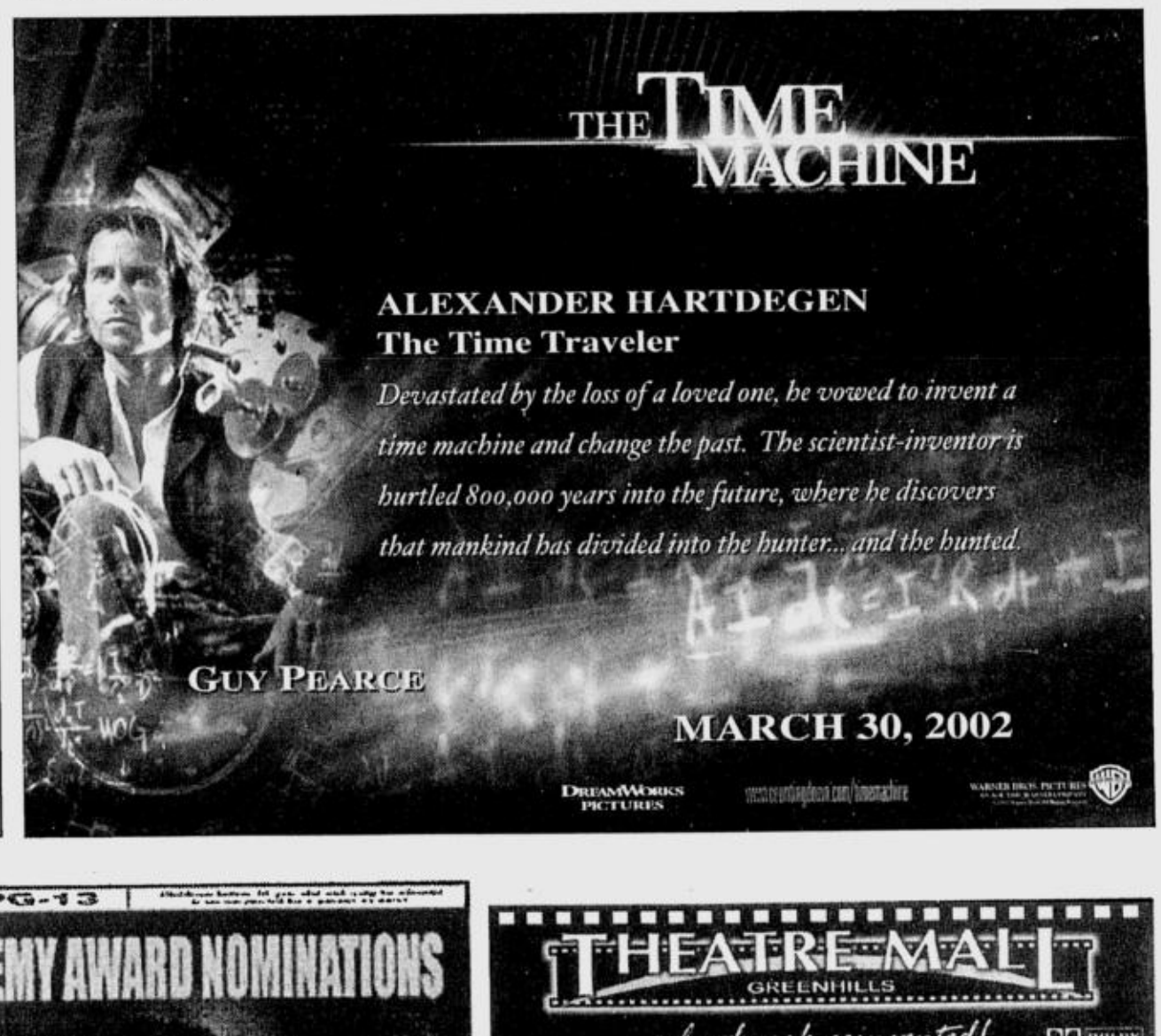

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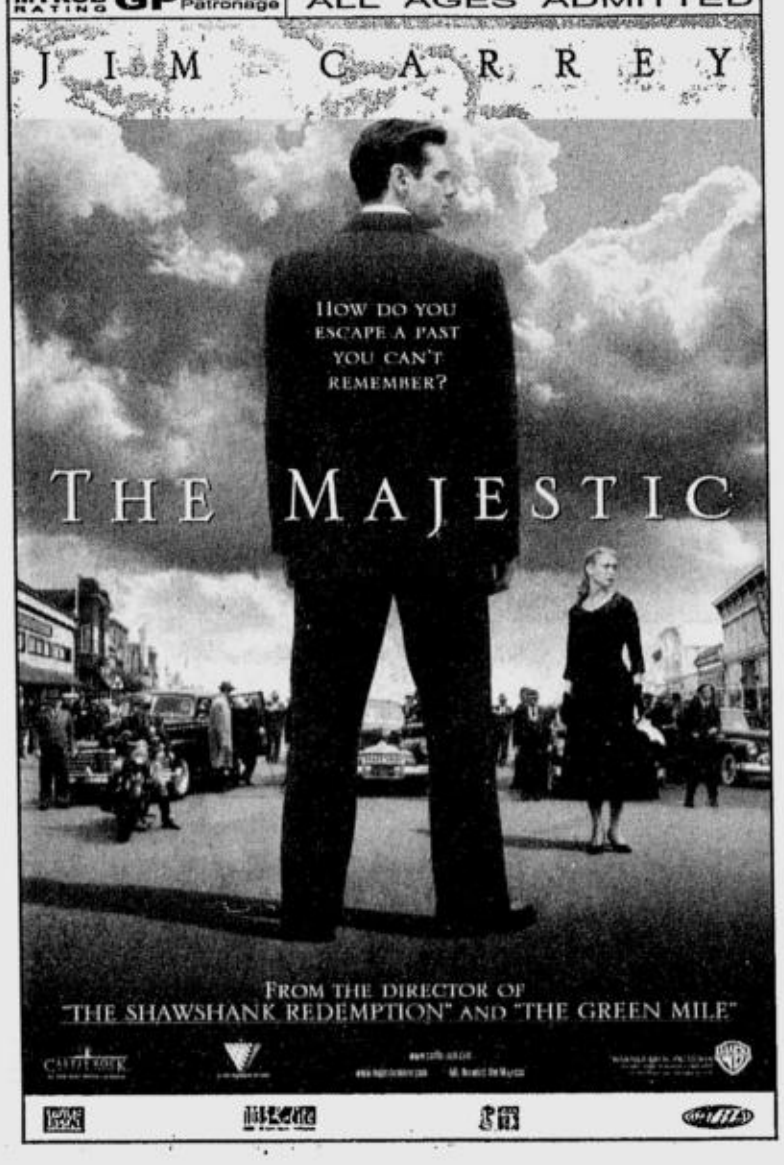

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QUEEN OF THE DAMNED - P 13 10:40, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	SHIPPING NEWS - P 13 12:30, 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:10	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00, 11:00

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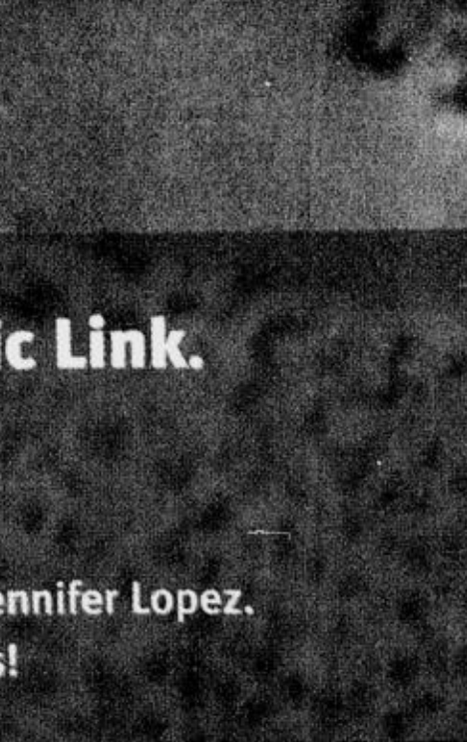
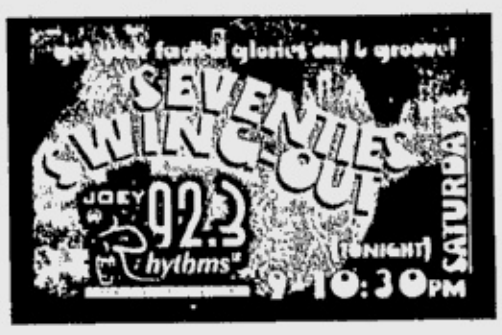




SATURDAY
MARCH 16, 2002
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

SEC urges PSE brokers to resolve election row

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SECURITIES Exchange Commission has appealed to stockbrokers of the Philippine Stock Exchange to transcend their differences and resolve the current leadership squabble for the sake of the investing public.

"This election has given the PSE one defining moment to show the world that it can rise above self-interest," according to a statement dated March 14 signed by SEC Chair Lilia Bautista and Commissioners Fe Eloisa Gloria, Edijer Martinez and Juanita Cueto.

This developed as PSE president Ernest Leung yesterday held a dialogue with the PSE staff to explain the issues surrounding the controversial elections. This was after the SEC issued on Thursday a clarification upholding the legitimacy of Leung's appointment as president amid protest from some brokers.

In a short statement of appeal, which Bautista said was better than issuing an order, the SEC told the stockbrokers that the current impasse at the PSE was not healthy for the Philippine market.

"We enjoin the current board of directors to come to a reasonable and proper settlement of their differences for the good of the Philippine capital market, now poised to reach new heights in response to improving economic conditions. We urge you not to derail the process," the statement said.

The SEC said that in accordance with its mandate to promote good governance, it believed that among the core responsibilities of the board of directors of a demutualized exchange was that owed to all of its stakeholders and not just to its stockholders.

"Good governance means that the board of directors must always act in the interests of the PSE, which they govern on behalf of the stakeholders," it said.

"The SRC (Securities Regulation Code) precisely provides for a majority of the directors to be drawn from among non-brokers, who are there to protect the public's interests. Non-broker directors have exactly the same powers and responsibilities as broker-directors, and may so exercise their rights," it stressed.

In a press briefing, Bautista also said that the SEC would not step into the dispute—in the meantime—but might be prompted to come up with an order if the row started to adversely affect the stock market.

The leadership dispute was triggered by the election of Vivian Yuchengco as the new PSE chair with the help of non-broker directors who control majority of the 15-member board. The group of rival Robert Coyiuto said he should have been elected as chair instead as his slate edged out Yuchengco's during the brokers' poll last Saturday with a ratio of 5:2.

Coyiuto's group said they had expected the non-brokers, who were adopted as a common slate, to have abstained from the voting for the new PSE chair to preserve their independence. As the non-brokers were not subjected to free balloting as the broker represen-

SEC/ B2

Gov't allots P3.4B for expansion of 5 Mindanao airports

By Norman Bordadora

THE GOVERNMENT has earmarked P3.43 billion for the improvement and expansion of five airports in Mindanao as part of its infrastructure investment program in southern Philippines.

Transportation and Communications Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez said the investment is expected to generate thousands of jobs and further improve investment and development possibilities in Mindanao.

"By allocating a huge sum for these airports in Mindanao, the government is demonstrating its commitment to improve the local economy and improve the living standards of the people in Mindanao," Alvarez said.

The five airport improvement projects would be at the Dipolog Airport, where P609 million has been allotted; Butuan Airport, P589 million; Pagadian Airport, P497 million; Cotabato Airport, P1.429 billion; and Sangasanga Airport, P302 billion.

With the expansion and modernization of these five airports, Alvarez predicted increased trade and tourism in Mindanao.

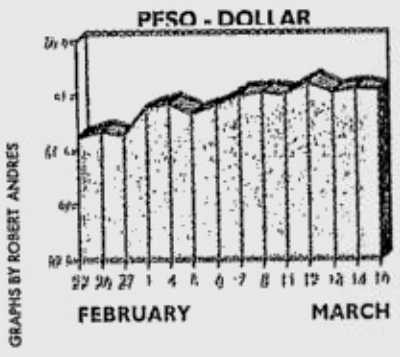
"With improved air transport services, we can look forward to heightened business activity and increased level of employment in the region," the secretary added.

"Moreover, we foresee more tourists coming in to see the many scenic spots of Mindanao," Alvarez said.

He said that the five airport projects are included in the Third Airport Development Project, which is being funded by the Asian Development Bank and the European Investment Bank.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



GRAPHS BY ROBERT ANDRES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.955 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 15, 2002

¥129.06 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 15, 2002

GOLD: $291.20/291.70
per ounce Hong Kong, March 15, 2002

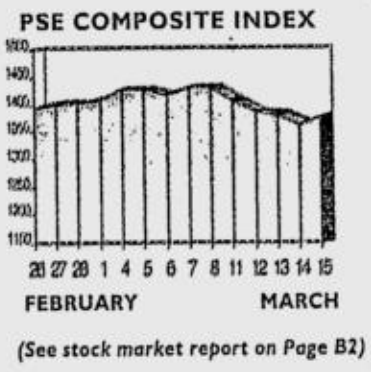
STOCK MARKET

Shares rise 1%

SHARE prices rose one percent yesterday on selective bargain-hunting, dealers said.

"Many stocks, including the index (itself), are already in oversold territory. This is just a rebound," said Joseph Roxas of Eagle Equities.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 13.48 points to close at 1,379.61.



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Turnover fell to 334 million shares worth P322 million compared to 591 million shares worth P432 million traded on Thursday.

Dealers said investors largely discounted the central bank's decision to trim its key overnight rates. The central bank's overnight borrowing rate slid to a 10-year low of 7 percent in the latest round of easing monetary policy.

"Even with the successive rate cuts, we haven't seen a significant growth in loans, a more crucial indicator of an economic pickup," said Oliver Plana of Asiasec Equities. *AFP*

Tambunting defers IPO

PAWNSHOP chain operator TFS Inc. has deferred its initial public offering at the Philippine Stock Exchange from next week to the fourth quarter of this year or early 2003 due to unfavorable market conditions.

TFS, which was supposed to be the second company to list on the SME board, was originally planning to list on the small and medium enterprise (SME) board of the PSE by April 10 after an IPO beginning March 18-22.

In its letter to the PSE yesterday, the company cited "existing conditions in the market" as the reason behind the deferment of its IPO. It did not elaborate.

The decision to defer the IPO came at a time that a leadership squabble is brewing in the PSE.

"We assure you that the principal shareholders of TFS are still committed to list on the PSE," TFS chair and CEO Antonio Tambunting Jr. said.

"In the meantime, we'll continue to strengthen our core business to make the company attractive to the investing public," he said.

TFS was supposed to offer 30 million new unclassified common shares or 30 percent of its post-IPO shares at P1.05 per share. It had tapped BV Partners Inc. as financial adviser and Keppel IVI Investments Inc. as issue manager.

TFS expected to raise gross proceeds of P31.5 million from the offer and net P26.78 million after deducting underwriting fees and other expenses. Proceeds were to be used to fund the company's network expansion plans.

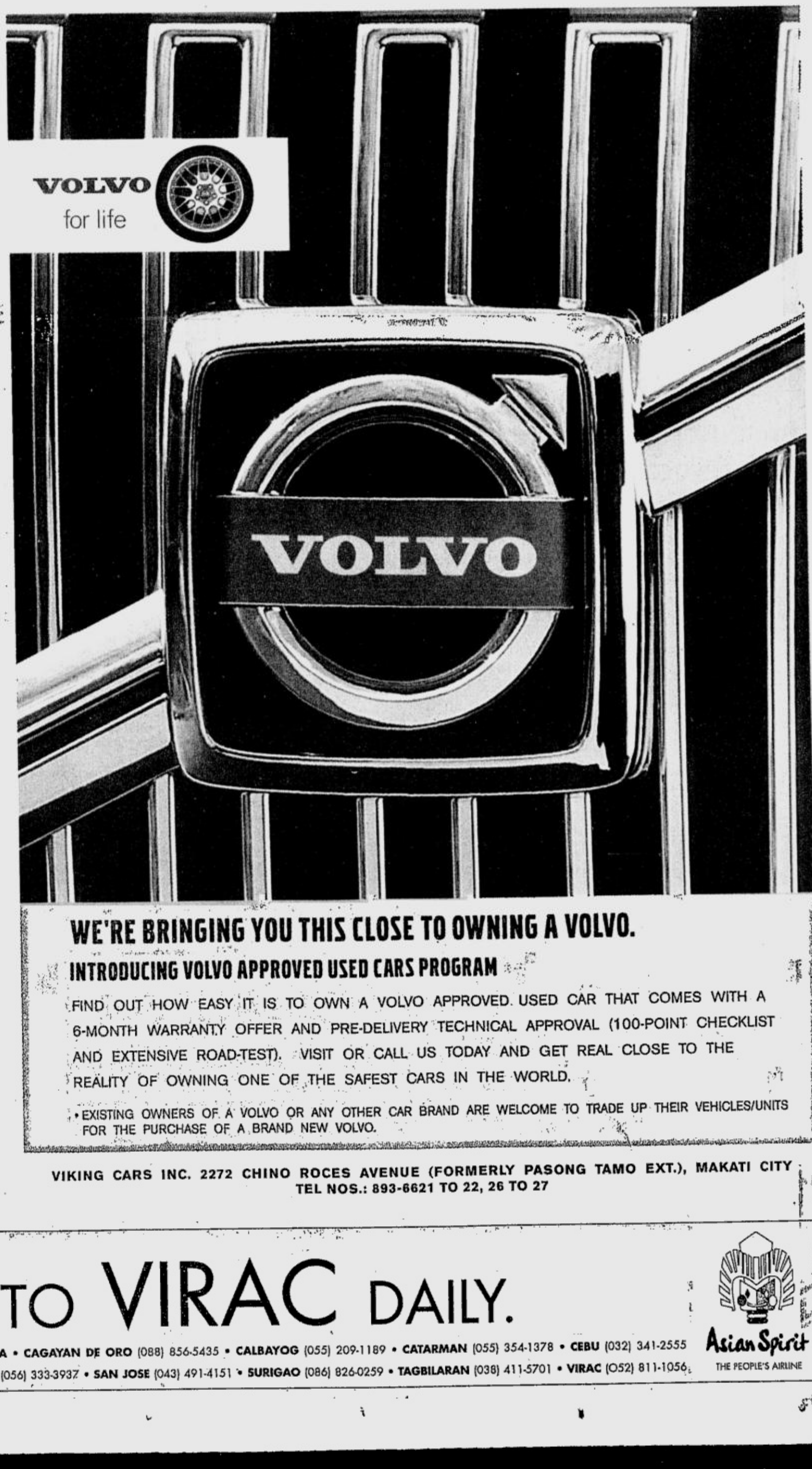
The Tambunting pawnshop network was founded in 1906 in Manila by the late Ildefonso Tan Bunting under the name "Casa Agencia de Empenos de Ildefonso Tan Bunting."

RP debt yields ease

YIELDS of government treasuries in the secondary market continued to fall yesterday, as banks moved funds from the central bank's short term deposit instruments and into treasuries, traders said.

A further 25 basis points cut in overnight rates to a fresh 10-year low, and prospects for more, was also keeping yields under pressure.

On Thursday, the policy-setting monetary board announced it was chopping the overnight borrowing rate to 7.0 percent—the lowest mark since 1992—and BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he could not rule out further reductions in the months to come. *Reuters*



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Asian Spirit
THE PEOPLE'S AIRLINE

Ang's ten

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

I KNOW what is bothering investors in the stock market. There was no rally in the past two days. Investors therefore know instantly that something is wrong.

It seems a long time ago, but it was only last Wednesday, when the market saw a rally—a real rally. It was a protest action, featuring stockbrokers and traders.

They were the secluded ones, the few remaining there on the sleepy trading floor of the Pasig branch of the Philippine Stock Exchange in Tektite.

Alright, it was a different kind of rally. It was a silly rally, something never ever before seen in the stock market, but it was still a rally nonetheless.

Sure, the market would love the other kind of rally. It is still trying to decide if it should be happy or sad, since the entire region is looking at better business prospects.

But that is boring stuff. A market does not live by bread alone. It needs childish things like that rally of the brokers. This kind of market needs surprises now and then.

* * *

THAT'S because nothing seems to astonish this market anymore. Take the recent appointment of Ramon Ang, vice chair of San Miguel, as president and COO.

Based on a report by Asiasec Equities, the appointment did not come as a surprise. Whaaat? San Miguel is the biggest private business here. It should be big news.

But the market knew, anyway, according to the report, Ang was serving as "unofficial" COO of the company. Thus his appointment was as exciting as platonic love.

Ang has been involved in some major moves of San Miguel, ever since its chair, Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., took over management of the company in 1998.

Still, some people, who perhaps had nothing better to do, were able to imply disapproval. Look, ma, this Ang did not even come from Harvard. Unthinkable!

Well, a certain Bill Gates did not mind dropping out of college. Poor guy, he would never amount to something. He can only become the richest man in the world.

* * *

WORD goes around that San Miguel's tie-up with a foreign group was Ang's brainchild. It was already the plan, ever since Cojuangco took control.

Thus the entry of Japan's Kirin Brewery, plus its $540 million worth of investments in San Miguel—as in "cash"—took almost three years of back-and-forth negotiations.

Like it or not, for San Miguel to fly, Cojuangco had to insulate it from politics. The only way to do it was, well, to get an investor that is known all over the world.

And so for the past three years, according to the story, Ang was sleeping in different airports, circling the globe for who that investor would be.

It seems that San Miguel was talking to five different groups all at the same time. Kirin only became the best prospect, because it was willing to pay the price.

I don't know if you learn such things in school—not by doing them in real life, taking the risks and facing the outcome. I just know AIM wants Ang for a little lecture.

* * *

ANYWAY, as the Asiasec saw it, the top-heavy San Miguel saved millions upon millions of pesos, because Ang streamlined its management.

After Ang was also done overhauling its foreign operations, the company made money for the first time ever overseas. Profits now amount to $9 million a year.

But above all that re-engineering, or whatever it is called now in the buzzword-fixated corporate world, in the market, some refer to Ang as the . . . well, "pushover."

He pushed over San Miguel's investments where it did not have control. The firm got paid for those investments in dollars. Hundreds of millions of dollars!

Luckily, the peso cooperated by depreciating, just as San Miguel got the dollars, meaning the company made a lot of money out of forex gains by doing nothing.

It's all about the track record! San Miguel in 1998 posted operating profits of P4 billion. Last year they hit P10 billion already!

Because of his role in the company as "unofficial" COO, we all know that those P10 billion are, for a good part, Ang's work. What's that—Ang's ten?

* * *

LAST year, the Government Service Insurance System posted a net income of more than P30 billion. Its income from investments reach P11 billion. In short, very mucho!

No wonder, Winston Garcia, president and general manager, is getting it from GSIS employees. They are staging protest rallies outside the GSIS offices.

From what I gathered, they want Garcia to exercise "leniency" in disciplining an officer of the employees' union. Garcia apparently suspended the officer.

It seems that, in a public gathering last Christmas, the officer let loose some unsavory attacks, sprinkled with curses, at Garcia. Reason: Garcia is *barat*!

On top of the regular 13th month pay, the GSIS board of trustees decided to give the GSIS employees a "cash gift" of P40,000 each.

Although they wanted only P30,000 more, Garcia could not even give it to them. So what if the board of trustees would not even think of considering the proposal!

In other government offices, as Garcia noted over radio yesterday, employees got only P1,000 in "cash gift" last Christmas.

So if Garcia was *barat*, what do you call Gloriaetta? Oops!

Gov't to sell 400-mw Sucat plant

ENERGY Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said the government would definitely sell the 400-megawatt Sucat power plant as a stand-alone item due to strong investor interest.

Perez told reporters that this was what the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. had planned under its privatization plan for National Power Corp.

He said Psalm would be ready to start the bidding process if and when the Joint Congressional Power Commission approved the plan.

Early last month, Perez said that an investor was interested in the Sucat plant as a stand-alone asset rather than as part of a package.

Energy officials have said that other power plants would be sold in lots based on their proximity to one another or the types of fuel they use.

Perez said Intergen, a joint venture of Shell Generating BV and Bechtel Enterprises Energy BV, had expressed interest in Sucat during a pre-marketing trip in London.

Due to an electricity glut, Napocor made Sucat a stand-by unit that would run only during emergencies.

Sucat's proximity to Manila makes it an ideal site for a new gas-fired plant that can make use of the natural gas from the Malampaya gas field and processed in Batangas.

Also last month, First Gas Holdings Corp. announced it was prepared to pursue projects amounting to $1 billion to promote the natural gas industry.

Part of this is the construction of a 500-mw gas plant in Sucat that will receive natural gas through a pipeline from Batangas.

First Gas president Peter Garrucho Jr. said the firm would bid aggressively for the Sucat asset.

Documents obtained by the INQUIRER indicated that Psalm was also planning to sell individually Napocor's four geothermal plants in Southern Luzon and Leyte.

The same goes with several hydropower plants in the Visayas and Mindanao.

A number of diesel-fired power plants and barges, mostly in the Visayas, will also be sold individually.

The power commission is set to discuss the privatization plan for Napocor's generating plants after approving that of National Transmission Corp. early this week.

Ronnel W. Domingo

Consumer group seeks revocation of Nextel franchise

By Alcuin Papa

A CIVIL consumer group yesterday asked the National Telecommunications Commission to revoke the franchise of cellular network Nextel for violating the law on foreign ownership of local companies.

The Citizens Movement for Protectionism and Reform (CMPR), in a complaint filed yesterday with the NTC, claimed that the foreign equity in Nextel Communications Philippines Inc. (NCPI) was 59.08 percent while the local equity was only 40.92 percent.

This, the group said, violates the constitutional provision for foreign ownership of public utilities.

Section 11, Article 12 of the Constitution states that "No franchise, certificate or any other form of authorization for the operation of a public utility shall be granted except to citizens of the Philippines or to corporations or associations organized under the laws of the Philippines at least sixty percent of whose capital is owned by such citizens."

The group's eight-page complaint said that Nextel "is engaged in the telecommunications business which is a public utility. In fact, it is a holder of a legislative franchise under RA 7301. Despite the constitutional mandate however, more than the 40 percent of the shares of the Respondent Corporation is now being controlled by non-Filipinos."

The group said 30 percent of Nextel Communications Phils. Inc. was owned by Top Mega Enterprises Ltd., a Hong Kong-based corporation owned and controlled by Nextel International Inc. (NII) based in the US.

Another 10 percent of NCPI is owned by Joyce Link Ltd., a foreign corporation based in the British Virgin Islands likewise owned and controlled by NII.

According to records, local companies Jetcom Inc. owns 12.3 percent of NCPI; Gamboa Holdings Inc. has 20 percent; Emerald Investments Inc. has another 20 percent, while Foodcamp Industries and Marketing Corp. owns the remaining 7.7 percent.

₱1.7-B waste converter project gets BOI incentives

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

HI-TECH Bioenergy Inc.—a 70-30 Filipino-Taiwanese provider of waste handling services—has obtained pioneer incentives from the Board of Investments for its P1.716-billion solid waste converter project in Malabon.

Based on its application, Hi-Tech Bioenergy will build the project with its Austrian technological partner, Entec Umwelttechnik GmbH (ENTE), under a build-operate-and-transfer scheme. BOT projects are eligible for pioneer incentives under BOI rules. This will entitle the project to income tax holidays for at least six years.

Under its contract, which was awarded by the municipal government of Malabon, Hi-Tech Bioenergy will excavate and clean up the existing waste dump in Malabon and build an advanced waste sorting and composting plant. The plant can handle 500 tons of waste a day from Malabon and neighboring areas.

Hi-Tech Bioenergy will also build a fermentation plant for treatment of organic residues and energy recovery and a new sanitary landfill at par with European standards. It expects to generate power of 13,834-megawatt hours a year and 19,440 tons per year of refuse-derived, bio fertilizer.

ENTE will provide the company with planning and design services; a Smell-Well system; and special parts for the sorting, fermentation and composting facilities.

The plant is expected to start operations by next year and it will create 91 new jobs. It is being harnessed as a model for future waste management projects in Metro Manila. The project was undertaken to respond to the need for a permanent solution to the solid waste management problem of Malabon and nearby areas in Metro Manila.

CURRENCIES

March 15, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.132375	1.000000	50.9220
Japan	Yen	0.008769	0.007744	0.3943
United Kingdom	Pound	1.609444	1.421300	72.3754
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145187	0.128215	6.5290
Switzerland	Franc	0.684338	0.604339	30.7742
Canada	Dollar	0.712096	0.628852	32.0224
Singapore	Dollar	0.621978	0.549269	27.9699
Australia	Dollar	0.591936	0.522739	26.6189
Bahrain	Dinar	3.003806	2.652661	135.0788
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.301967	0.266667	13.5792
Brunei	Dollar	0.619122	0.546747	27.8415
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000113	0.000100	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.026219	0.023154	1.1790
UAE	Dirham	0.308322	0.272279	13.8650
Korea	Won	0.000864	0.000763	0.0389
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.883100	44.9692
Brazil	Real	0.481862	0.425532	21.6689
Denmark	Kroner	0.134599	0.118864	6.0528
India	Rupee	0.023267	0.020547	1.0463
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.297993	0.263158	13.4005
Mexico	New Peso	0.124286	0.109757	5.5890
New Zealand	Dollar	0.487610	0.430608	21.9274
Norway	Kroner	0.129086	0.113996	5.8049
Pakistan	Rupee	0.018861	0.016656	0.8482
South Africa	Rand	0.097169	0.08581	4.3696
Sweden	Kroner	0.109569	0.09676	4.9272
Syria	Pound	0.025853	0.022831	1.1626
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032465	0.02867	1.4599
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001238	0.001093	0.0557

DISCLOSURES

NEGROS Navigation Co. Inc. denied having any information that could explain the increase in its share price that rose from P0.23 to P0.34 per share.

* * *

IPEOPLE Inc. hired **Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.'s** stock transfer department as its transfer agent effective March 18.

* * *

APPOINTED interim corporate secretary of **Universal Rightfield Property Holdings Inc.** was John Sadullo.

* * *

JG Summit Holdings Inc.'s wholly owned subsidiary **Express Holdings Inc.** bought additional 719,000 shares of JG at P1.84 per share and 4,000 shares of **Universal Robina Corp.** at P4.90 per share.

* * *

A. BROWN Co. Inc. bought 5.7 million of its own shares at P0.50 per share.

* * *

GLOBE Telecom Inc.'s additional listing of 8.9 million common shares at P0.50 per share was set for March 18. The listing is to cover the private placement of **Ayala Corp., Singapore Telecom International Pte. Ltd.** and **DeTeAsia Holding GmbH** at a subscription price of P686 per share. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, March 15, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	1,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65.5	65.5	65	65.5	280,700
China Banking Corp.	590	590	590	590	2,460
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	33	34.5	33	34	595,600
First E-Bank Corp.	2.4	2.44	2.4	2.44	30,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	44	43.5	43.5	7,200
Philippine National Bank	61	61	61	61	700
Union Bank of the Phil.	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	35,300
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1385	1380	1380	2,370
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1020	1030	1015	1025	20,700
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	3,200
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.7	0.71	2,950,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	780	795	780	795	41,210
Ipeople Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	20,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.06	0.065	0.06	0.065	14,600,000
Piltel	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.46	3,580,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	505	510	505	505	76,070
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.022	97,700,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30.5	31.5	30.5	31.5	39,100
Manila Electric Co. B	44	45.5	44	45	1,306,900
Petron Corp.	1.74	1.82	1.74	1.82	3,783,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.48	2.55	2.44	2.5	5,367,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Republic Cement Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	100,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.52	1.5	1.52	87,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	11.75	12.5	11.75	12.25	726,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	23	23	23	23	42,000
RFM Corp.	1.48	1.56	1.48	1.54	2,015,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47	47.5	47	47.5	12,100
San Miguel Corp. B	61.5	62.5	61.5	62.5	38,700
Universal Robina Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	105,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.51	20,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.51	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.5	553,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.9	2	1.9	1.98	3,902,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.72	0.74	0.72	0.74	130,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	140,000
APC Group Inc.	0.11	0.125	0.11	0.125	17,960,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	23,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	15,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.41	0.41	0.41	0.41	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.76	0.79	0.76	0.78	7,940,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	690,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.105	0.105	0.105	1,800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	10,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	10,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	30	32	30	32	116,400
Global Equities Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	2,000,000
Ionics Inc.	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.8	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.84	1.86	1.84	1.86	861,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	1,560,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	500,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.55	0.55	720,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	1,050,000
Music Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	630,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,160,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	500,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Cen Azucar De La Carlota	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	10,000
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	5,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
Pryce Corp.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.1	1,700,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14.25	14.5	14.25	14.5	56,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.48	0.49	3,090,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	140,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	250,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	32.5	32.5	32.5	32.5	196,400
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	790	775	790	1,190
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	37,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	775	775	775	775	20
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	4,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
Philweb.Com Inc.-Warrants	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	51,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.4	6.6	6.3	6.5	1,590,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	110,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.29	0.27	0.29	820,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.47	0.49	0.47	0.48	270,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	4,070,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.04	2.14	2.04	2.1	4,820,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.39	1,450,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	54,000
SM Development Corp.	0.99	1	0.99	1	190,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.2	6.5	6.2	6.5	2,948,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	800,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min. & Dev't.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	10,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	13,400,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	890,000
Omico Corp.	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	0.0046	10,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't. Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	3,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.0044	0.004	0.0044	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	17,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	2,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	14,200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	500,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,078,030	65,702,650.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	256,671,490	214,225,235.00
PRO	17,122,000	41,895,020.00
Mining	25,430,000	850,900.00
OIL	39,700,000	363,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	340,001,520	323,037,205.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	560.95	UP 0.54
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,892.44	UP 18.74
PRO	592.44	UP 12.73
Mining	1,313.89	DOWN 3.16
OIL	1.76	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	748.60	UP 5.34
Composite	1,379.61	UP 13.48

NO. OF ADVANCES: 41; NO. OF DECLINES: 23; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 39; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 103; NO. OF TRADES: 1,733

SEC urges PSE . . .

From page B1

tatives were, they said the non-brokers should have respected the mandate given to Coyiuto's group.

Last Wednesday, stockbrokers based at the PSE head office in Ortigas staged a rally at the trading floor to protest Yuchengco's election. Leung, who only assumed office since the start of this year, was also urged to step down, his qualification as PSE president questioned because he was chair of DBP Daiwa Securities Philippines until June 30, 2001.

The SRC bars from the PSE presidency persons who had been associated with any broker or dealer or listed companies during the last two years.

But the SEC chief clarified that Leung became chair of DBP Daiwa only by reason of his position as chair of state-controlled Development Bank of the Philippines and not as an owner or stockholder of DBP. The SEC also noted that the SRC gave it the power to give "exemptive relief" and had done so in the case of Leung after the SEC took into account the "special circumstances of his election as chair of DBP Daiwa Securities."

RP credit rating upgrade seen

By Clarissa S. Batino

FINANCE Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday said the economic team would start convincing foreign rating agencies to upgrade the country's sovereign rating to investment grade.

European rating firm Fitch is scheduled to conduct its annual evaluation of the Philippines in the coming week. Fitch currently rates the Philippine government a notch bellow investment grade or BB+ similar to the ratings of Moody's Investors Service and Standard & Poor's.

Among the top three global rating firms, Fitch was the last to downgrade its outlook for the Philippines to negative during the last days of the Estrada administration in January 2001. The two New York-based firms had handed down a negative outlook for the country right after the juetengate scandal in October 2000.

Yet Fitch was also the first to upgrade its outlook from negative to stable a year ago. Moody's had revised its outlook to stable last February and S&P was expected to hand down a similar verdict soon.

A stable outlook sets the tone for a possible upgrade in the country's rating in the future. A better rating leads to a lower cost of borrowing for the government and improved confidence among investors and creditors.

"We would want an upgrade if it is possible. We would present to them our achievements and see how it would turn out," Camacho said. Fitch would send a review team from March 20 to 22.

Fitch had commended the country's "remarkable resilience to recent external developments," particularly the global slowdown following the Sept. 11 tragedy in the United States.

While the country's exports had plunged by 16 percent last year as a result of the slowdown of the US economy, the Philippines' gross domestic product managed to grow by 3.4 percent last year, buoyed by strong farm output.

The country's resilience was also evident as it completed foreign borrowings one after the other at a price believed to be cheap for the government.

Fitch also pointed to the country's comfortable level of dollar reserves, which stood at $16.2 billion as of end-February, progress in structural reforms following the enactment of the Anti Money Laundering Law and the Power Sector Reform Law.

A plus point for the Philippines, according to Fitch, was the fiscal turnout in 2001 when the budget deficit was contained at P147 billion, a level close to its target of P145 billion.

Seen by Fitch as the remaining areas of concern would be the country's high level of public debt and its "tenuous grip on public finances." The country's debts account for almost 70 percent of its GDP, a trait common to countries with a much lower credit rating.

While Fitch recognized that political risks had diminished, the Muslim insurgency in the South remained a concern.

"A stable outlook would give us a basis to ask for an upgrade in the rating specially if we can demonstrate that the gains we have achieved so far would be sustainable," Camacho said.

The Japan Credit Rating Agency had raised its rating for the Philippines to investment grade during the early days of the Macapagal administration.

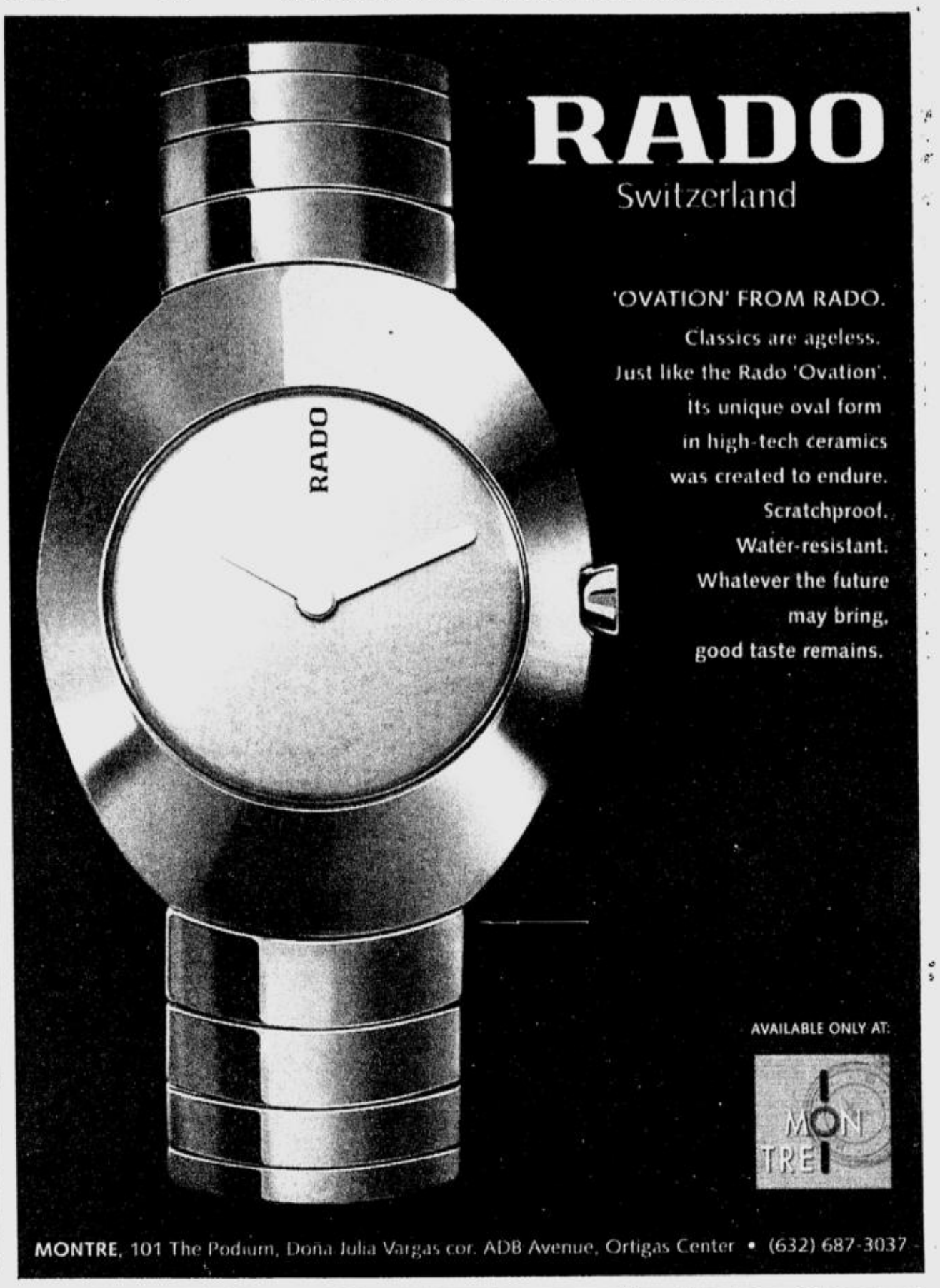
ROXAS HOLDINGS, INC.
(formerly, Central Azucarera Don Pedro)
6th Floor, Cacho-Gonzales Bldg.
101 Aguirre Street, Legaspi Village
Makati City, Metro Manila

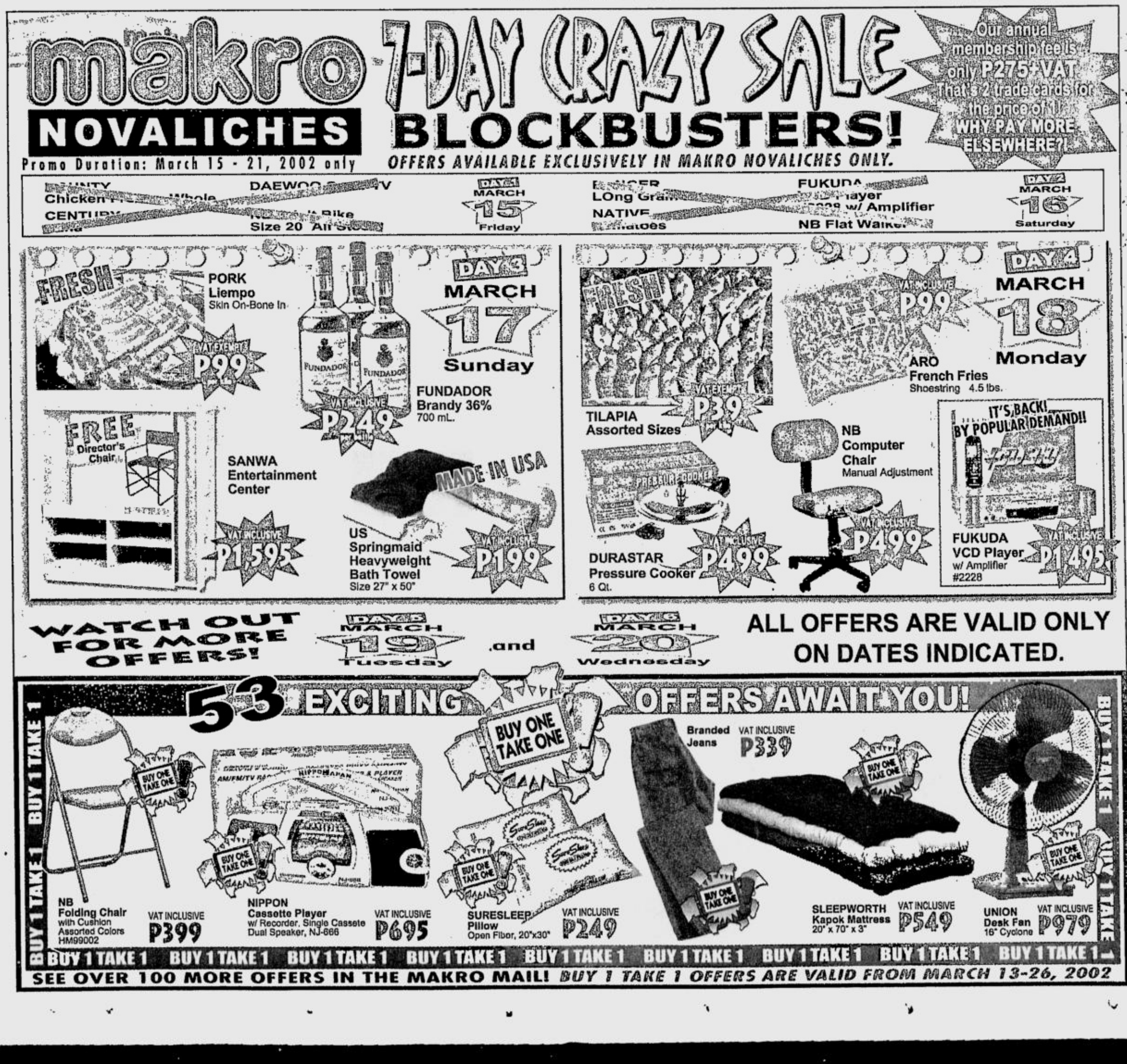
Notice To Shareholders

Notice is hereby given that Roxas Holdings, Inc. (formerly, Central Azucarera Don Pedro) will issue stock certificates bearing its new corporate name in order to replace the old stock certificates starting on 18 March 2002.

The new certificates will be issued by the company's transfer agent, Unionbank of the Philippines, at its offices located at the 3rd Floor, SSS Building, Ayala cor. Herrera Sts., Makati City, Metro Manila upon surrender of the old certificates.

(Sgd.) **FLORENCIO M. MAMAUAG, JR.**
Assistant Corporate Secretary





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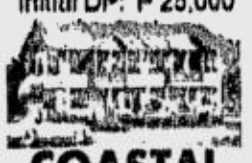

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2.2M to 4M Bnew units
Pls. Call Lyn: 728-8049 or (0917)272-7239

TH East Manor 3BR 2TB Pkg 2.8M 643-9064 0916-3776676

QUEZON CITY

158 sqm 3br 3tb P4M St. Ignatius Call 634-1212

Cubao Condo P1.3M 10% DP 9132224;9124428;4381161

TandangSora 3br+1md 2tb P2.5M DBO 0917-8143792

The Celebrity Place
TOWNHOMES
BESIDE
CELEBRITY SPORTS
Capitol Hills QC
nr UP & Ateneo
3 TWNHSE MODELS TO CHOOSE FROM
3BR 2CAR GARAGE
MAIDS ROOM & RELAXING GARDEN
20%DOWN
BAL ZERO INTEREST
PRIVILEGE MEMBERSHIP AT CELEBRITY CLUB
FOR MORE INFO CALL
Celebrity Place Office
9520434 to 35
9312116
BROKER / AGENTS WELCOME

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TalBeach High Airy 3BR Seaside FF 631-6439 • 630-3342

FACTORY/WHSE

Warehouse 4 Rent 1350sqm F. Manalo St. San Juan P99T /mo. Call 724-7057 / 6735

FARM/FISHPEN

Baras Farm 1.5H 635-0462

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

MAKATI

2Bdrm/ U/Dn TB873770 / 1Cr GtgH2O/Npnt/Screen/Cmpd

MARIKINA

Apt&Room 4rent 9463004

PARANAQUE

Nr NAIA ONew 2BR 2TB 8T-9.5T/mo 8250260/1751

QUEZON CITY

3Bedrooms Carport P0.000 Rent Tel 9122930 ; 9122994

80 C & D Pangasinan QC Call Jimmy CP-0917-4790780 Aga 0917-9789840 Tel 920-3934 Near SM City

•P5.5T Studio T-9207419

SAN JUAN

Nice 2BR+Parking • 722-0978

HOUSE

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PARANAQUE

MBV Pque 2sty 5BR4TB w/phone 8445449 CP09186548815 Didi

QUEZON CITY

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CONDO/TWNHSE

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2BR2TB PKG+DUES P22T BR NEW MKT COND 8905750

• 3 SALCEDO PLACE •
Unit 2302 3 BR 2 Prkg
189 sq.m. F.Furnished
CALL: Myrna 893-1043

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2 Bedroom, Fully Furnished, w/ One Parking Space
Call 634-3171 • ELIZA/OWEN

• LE TRIOMPHE •
Unit 705 2 BR w/ Prkg
135 sq.m. F.Furnished
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Mkt. Condo Unit 4 Rent 15T /mo. Call 724-7057 Jho

RITZ TOWER 3BR FF 871-7336

MANILA

OCEAN TWR(RoxasBlvd) 2BR PRK/FUR 8334880 / 8525464

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Full Serviced Residences
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SAN JUAN

G'HILLS 1BR 5268048

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2% w/o TAKING CAR 3670169

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

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Commercial Space 4 Rent JB Vargas Shaw Blvd. 103sqm 30T/mo. Call 726-3016

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Prime Com Space 400sqm Ideal Bar/Rest Penny Rd 09190911750 5216621

PRIME COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR RENT/SALE
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307 sq.m.
Ideal for banks, restaurant, bars, etc.
Call BETH OR MRS. ONG @ 243-0856 to 57

TRANSPORTATION FOR SALE

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96 Honda 1own 09176038267
98 Honda 1own 09172560070

MAZDA

97Mazspeed 330T 0301977

MITSUBISHI

94 EL A1 Cond 160T 5317984

'95 GLXI P238T Call 8211147

'97 GLXI M/T 40Tkms P330T 0916-4839278

TOYOTA

'97 Toyota XL 1st own T-6821594 Call 09196825543

TOWNACE A/T 238T 9267433

OTHER CAR BRANDS

Delica Besta Town-Lite Ace 9120647 09178342020

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HONDA Tricycle Stainless Steel Side Car 7500 KM
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HONDA Tricycle Stainless Steel Side Car 7600 KM
• CALL 807-3486 •

BUSES/TRUCKS

9 Units Dumtruck Intrnl Cummins Engine 350Turbo P3.5M w/S-Part Tel. (044) 463-5211 / 463-7103 A1 Cond

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Forklift ; 4x4 Tractor P55T Genset & Loader #3610215

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CARS FOR RENT

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1380 STRX W/UDRV 2941359

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BNew L3 8533103/09163443087

BNEW VAN 9254058 8261045

BRDAL MB VANS 9296250

Vans Coaster Bus 913-9123

CITYWHEELS
Tel. 458-8392 ; 459-8393

IT/HIACE 9136710/4333692

L300 T7411356

L300 / Vans 578-8017(Roger)

MARIAN 8955627
CARS CSTER VANS BRDAL

StarexMB100HIAce9483535

MB HIAce L3 Urvan 8257135

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CARS FOR RENT

TOYCO Trans Coaster/Cars Vans Rental •000-8696•

WANTED TO BUY

BUYING USED CARS 8090210

CAR LOAN

1.5% FAST CAR LOAN 3877823/24

2% w/o Taking Car 8886533

2% w/o taking car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 3732083

2% w/oTaking Car 3646020

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BAKERY EQUIPMENT

Bakeshop Equipment
Ready Business 0917-4514251

FURNITURE

YAMAHA PIANOS
Grand & Upright T7213124

HOME APPLIANCE

High quality tube amplifier & pre-amp, tubes, kits, pin jacks & cords from Japan. We can test it 4 you. Call us Mon-Sat 8-5 pm 5413575 / 8202552 Sun 09194084603-Cristy or 09164873730-Liza

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others, High Price CASH CALL 09178142309/7269687

Buy/Sell Ready 2Use HS & College Educl Plan 8061674

Buy/Pawn Diamonds T834-2886

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

MISCELLANEOUS

1 HP Water Pump w/Pres. Tank P4T Call 634-1212

Massage Table, Professional "Oakworks" US Made P30T or offer Still in Orig Box Call 507-1332

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

Driver 40-45 yrs old Nr Nova QC Luk 4 Carol 4173860

Wanted Taxi Driver 6363603

FEMALE

COMPUTER SECRETARY FEMALE/SINGLE CALL 241-2664/66

Secretary S 21-25 yrs old Nr Nova QC Luk 4 Carol 4173860

WANTED Licensed Veterinarian preferably Female CL652-1604/2952220

MALE/FEMALE

All around hsemaid Yaya Cook 4752788 4331140

All-Around Beautician Riverbanks Mall 997-0935

CARE GIVER T5280722

Direct Hire (20) Office Staff 9134470 Start ASAP Ms. FE

Fitness Instructress (F) Swimming Instructress(F) Baker (M) Domestic Helper(F) 5623962

★Ofc Staff 9134470 Zernan★

★Urgnt! ADMN STAFF START ASAP 9134470 Lk Joyce★

•OFC STAFF 913-4470 LYN

Ofc Staff 9134470 Niko

ROBINS HOME DEPOT, INC. Now Hiring for FIELD and SHOWROOM PERSONNEL Call Joy Tel # 4164921

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

C.Y. Lopez Pawnshop, Inc. #233 Buendia Shopping Plaza Sen Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City will hold an auction sale on March 23, 2002 at 9:00AM including all items pawned up to October 2001
V.Zamora Jr. Lic. Auctioneer

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Earn More P/Time 9427008

FREE Real Estate Seminar 2926137/09178160250 Gabby

Globe 9%Smart 11% 745-9351

GREAT NEWS ! IF UR NOT EARNING OVER 200T/m @ UR PRSNT NETWRK BUS. LETS TALK NOW 8072359 RESH

Infant Kid, Teen, Adult Wear Inventory Sale 3736821

Restaurant For Sale Operating: Fully Equipped 850TH Neg. Owner Leaving Busy Area; Katipunan QC 0917-8415318 • 925-1597

VENDO MACHINE BIZNEZ!! EARN 10-20K/M 45T/ONLY 0919-4484564/886-3386

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of late Felipe N. De Guzman was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 323 Page 66 Book I Series of 2002 before Notary Public Lydia Bundoc of Paranaque PDI-March 9, 16 & 23, 2002

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late GLICERIO F. FUTOL was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. 210, Page 44, Book XXI, Series of 2001 before notary public of Atty. Eddie Fernandez of Mandaluyong City
(PDI- Mar. 2, 9, & 16 2002)

Notice is hereby given that estate of the late Betty C. Tiu has been the subject of extrajudicial settlement of estate among heirs with waiver of rights under Doc No. 457, Page No. 092, Book No. XIV, Series of 2002 in the notarial registry of Atty. Jose V. Marcelle.
(PDI-Mar. 9, 16 & 23 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LOURDES B. VILLARANDA was settled extrajudicially by an affidavit of self-adjudication by the sole heirs, as per Doc No.241, Page No. 49, Book No. I, Series of 2002 before Quezon City Notary Public Atty. Bernard Philip C. Claustro
(PDI-March 2, 9 & 16, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Orchard Golf & Country Club Certificate #B-0183 under the name of Anthony Samuel Uy Lee has been declared lost (PDI-Mar. 9,16 & 23 2002)

Notice is hereby given that based on the affidavit of Loss of Mr. Henry Lo Lim SM Prime Holdings Inc. Stock Cert 9080951 Empire East Land Holdings Inc. Stock Cert 105027 Ayala Land Inc. Stock Cert 19643 Metro Pacific Corp. (Formerly Metro Drug Inc.) Stock Cert. 0127277 Manila Electric Co. Stock Cert Nos 283091 & 291502 issued in the name of Henry Lo Lim have been reported Loss.
(PDI-Mar. 9, 16, & 23 2002)

PERSONAL

Thank You Holy Spirit-CMP

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH
Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God, I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.
This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle.
Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail so be sure you really want what you ask.

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO SELL PROPERTIES

The National Housing Authority (NHA) is inviting landowners to offer properties within Iloilo City and its periphery for acquisition by NHA to be used for resettlement purposes.

The properties offered should be classified as "Residential" located within 20 kilometers radius of the Iloilo City Central Business District with area of 5-10 hectares, access road or right of way, access to water and power sources and should not require extensive filling.

Offers to sell land shall contain the following documents:

1. Letter of Intent to Sell Land
2. Copy of TCT (Certified by the Registry of Deeds)
3. Copy of Tax Declaration issued by the Assessor's Office
4. Latest Tax Receipts and Tax Clearance
5. Vicinity/Location Map and Lot Plan prepared by a Geodetic Engineer
6. Topographic Map (if available)

All proposals shall be addressed to the Chairman, Committee on Land Acquisition, 3rd Floor, NHA Main Building, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City either through:

The Project Manager
NHA - Iloilo Project Office
Diversion Road, Brgy Bakhaw
Mandurriao, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. 3212665 / 5080542

The Manager
Visayas Management Office
National Housing Authority
Elliptical Road, Diliman, Q.C.
Tel. No. 9226577

(Sgd.) EDGARDO D. PAMINTUAN
General Manager

(PDI--March 16 & 19, 2002)

HOKEI SUBIC CORPORATION
40 Golden Future St. cor. Aim High Ave.
SBIP Phase I, Subic Bay Freeport Zone

is in need of

GENERAL MANAGER ASSISTANT
PLANT MANAGER ASSISTANT

Qualification:
- Male/Female, 22-25 years old, University Graduate/Colleges in Manila
- Industrial Engineer/Mechanical Engineer Graduate
- Computer literate
- Career-Oriented
- With good communication skills
- Experience is an advantage

Interested applicants may call Ms. Hazel Clarino/Mary Grace Aquino at tel. nos. (047) 2525305 to 96 or send their resumé and complete credentials to the above address.

A Fast Growing and Stable Family Corporation with 30 years in the Agriculture Business is in urgent need of a

DYNAMIC SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER

- Male or Female, not more than 40 years old
- Positive, hardworking, and trustworthy
- Highly personable and possess excellent supervisory skills
- Preferably an Agriculture Graduate with experience in vegetable/flower farming field
- Articulate in oral and written English

Qualified applicants are requested to send their resumé to:

#8 Apo St., Quezon City

"Walk-In Applicants will not be entertained"

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Notice is hereby given that **SOUTHPORTS CONSTRUCTION** of **27A Galaxy St., GSIS Heights, Matina, Davao City**, a construction business enterprise owned by Engr. Henry J. Saavedra has changed its business name and now operated under its new business name of **HENSO CONSTRUCTION** owned by the same above-named owner.

Guarantee all obligations and liabilities of the former company, **SOUTHPORTS CONSTRUCTION**.

The public is hereby warned that no person has been authorized to transact business with any person or institution in the name of **SOUTHPORTS CONSTRUCTION** which has ceased its operation.

ENGR. HENRY J. SAAVEDRA

(PDI--Mar. 16, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Health
JOSE R. REYES MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER
Manila

INVITATION TO BID
FOR THE SUPPLY OF FOODSTUFFS

The Jose R. Reyes Memorial Medical Center invites sealed bid for the delivery of foodstuffs for the period MAY-AUGUST 2002.

Bid documents shall be released from **March 15-20, 2002** at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRMMC, upon payment of non-refundable fee of P100.00.

Pre-bid conference will be held on **March 21, 2002** at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRRMMC, 10:00 A.M.

Sealed bids shall be submitted at the Dietary Department, ground floor, JRRMMC, not later than 10:00 a.m., March 26, 2002, after which time the same shall be publicly opened.

JRRMMC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY BID, WAIVE ANY INFORMALITY OR DEFECT AND ACCEPT ANY BID WHICH IS MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE GOVERNMENT.

(Sgd.) **MA. ALICIA M. LIM, M.D.**
Medical Center Chief II

(PDI--March 15 & 16, 2002)

A Prestigious hospital in Libya is in need of the following:

NURSE - SICU + MED. ICU/CCU +CSICU	**Nurse ICU**
NURSE - NEONATAL ICU/NURSERY	**General Nurse**
NURSE - O.T. SCRUB	**Neonatal Nurse**
NURSE - E.R.	**Theater Nurse**
NURSE - GENERAL	**Anesthesiologist**
MIDWIFE - DELIVERY ROOM	**Hemodialyses Tech.**
	Sterilization Tech.

Qualifications:
1. Must be a Registered Nurse/Midwife/Technician Biomedical
2. Age not above (45) years old
3. Male/Female
4. Work experience must be 3 to 5 years

Qualified applicants are requested to come during office hours from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday to Saturday and bring resumé with picture together with other credentials or you may send your application on the address below:

WERR CORPORATION INTERNATIONAL
PARC Bldg., 2756 Bruger St., Putatan
Muntinlupa City, Phil.
Tel. Nos. 8610854/8611432/8611549
email address: werr@i-manila.com.ph

No fees to be collected Mag-ingat sa illegal recruiter
FOR MANPOWER POOLING ONLY
This AD is approved by POEA

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
Bureau of International Health Cooperation

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

The Integrated Community Health Services Project, a foreign-assisted project of the Department of Health is in immediate need of:

One (1) Project Evaluation Officer IV, SG-22
(For assignment in the Province of Apayao)

Minimum Qualifications:
- Bachelor's Degree relevant to the job
- At least three (3) years of relevant experience in the implementation of Foreign-Assisted Projects
- Sixteen (16) hours of relevant training
- With excellent written and oral communication skills
- Proficient in the use of Excel, MS Word and Powerpoint
- At least 25-35 years old

All interested applicants may submit their application letter with comprehensive resumé and picture to Engr. BONIFACIO B. MAGTIBAY, Project Manager, Integrated Community Health Services Project, 4th Floor, Philippine Tuberculosis Society Building, Tayuman, Sta. Cruz, Manila. Deadline for submission is on March 22, 2002.

(Sgd.) **MA. VIRGINIA G. ALA, MD, MPB**
Manager, UPMD

(PDI--Mar. 16 & 17, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: *sssemail@info.com.ph* • Web site *http://www.sss.gov.ph*

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

	NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBERS	DATE OF DEMISE
1)	Carmencita Dimaranan	Murphy St., Antipolo, Rizal	Sergio Alipio SS No. 04-0200694-5	September 12, 2001
2)	Lolita Agapay Bernarda Agapay	Carmona, Cavite	Alfredo Agapay SS No. 03-4530470-4	September 27, 2001
3)	Brigida G. Albor	Unknown	Isidro Albor SS No. 07-0831410-8	March 17, 2001
4)	Carmencita & Edith Alfonso	Unknown	Reynaldo C. Alfonso SS No. 03-1195869-2	September 6, 2001
5)	Raquel T. Balauro	Manila	Jerry A. Balauro SS No. 07-0230112-0 07-1563715-3	August 7, 2000
6)	Clarita B. Banaag	Unknown	Rodolfo M. Banaag SS No. 03-3298934-9	August 30, 2001
7)	Soledad Bautista	Unknown	Regino Bautista SS No. 03-2508674-1	January 28, 2002
8)	Roberto Castillon	Mindanao	Ma. Sisa D. Castillon SS No. 07-1284435-0	January 22, 2001
9)	Angelita B. Molina	Unknown	Margarita B. Calindas SS No. 01-0804374-9	September 19, 1999
10)	Esther Guitonez De Lara	Surigao	Wilfredo De Lara SS No. 09-0318589-9	July 19, 2000
11)	Evangeline Pacol	Unknown	Rosendo S. Delos Santos SS No. 03-0283141-4	November 27, 2001
12)	Imelda Ocaya	Norma's College Inn, Lucena City	Rodolfo F. Fruelda SS No. 04-0155271-7	June 8, 2001
13)	Soledad Fornias Gutierrez	26 Katarungan St., Caniogan, Pasig City	Maximo D. Gutierrez SS No. 03-3750186-1	March 3, 2000
14)	Estrella Imperial	Angeles City	Rolando Imperial SS No. 33-3346025-9	January 5, 2002
15)	Remedios R. Josol Florida Josol	2200 North Bay Blvd. Navotas, Rizal	Felipe A. Josol SS No. 03-2151667-1	July 31, 2001
16)	Marrieta Domingo Layaoen	Unknown	Paulino D. Layaoen SS No. 03-0209917-6	November 20, 2001
17)	Aurora Legista	Unknown	Rodolfo Legista SS No. 03-2748022-2	November 6, 2001
18)	Felixberta A. Macario	Nijo, Mabini, Davao Del Norte	Maximino J. Macario SS No. 09-0053432-0	September 22, 2001
19)	Florida Veloso	Unknown	Remegeldo Mateo SS No. 07-0537588-1	November 27, 2000
20)	Nenita Nobliza Umila Nobliza	Nuevo Iloco, Mawab, Comval Province	Jose S. Nobleza SS No. 09-0309653-5	February 2, 2001
21)	Norma Floria	43 Liberty Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City	Romeo Nudo SS No. 03-1186475-7	June 1, 1995
22)	Martina	Unknown	Marcos P. Osorio SS No. 03-1762061-0	August 14, 2001
23)	Felicitas Bernal Belinda Paczon	Unknown	Benjamin Paczon SS No. 03-0553335-3	November 22, 2001
24)	Adelfa Melina Padaran	Unknown	Enrico Padaran SS No. 07-0120303-8	August 10, 2001
25)	Rosalinda Timoging	827 Int. Dart. Paco. Manila	Adriano Panuncio SS No. 03-0113464-6	February 1, 2002
26)	Linda Salazar	Unknown	Gil J. Parayno SS No. 03-6227363-0 02-0400145-2	January 14, 2001
27)	Luzviminda Camid Pineda	Unknown	Rodolfo Pineda SS No. 03-3015081-1	January 21, 2002
28)	Charito Ramos, Donald, Jenniler & Richard	Unknown	Bienvenido Rodriguez SS No. 02-0211980-9	December 20, 2001
29)	Gemma Araojo	Unknown	Ricardo Rodriguez, Jr. SS No. 03-4775227-3	August 15, 2001
30)	Erlinda Mendoza	Cebu	Charles Rosal SS No. 07-1119717-6	March 6, 2001
31)	Margie S. Segundo Nenita Venancio	Unknown Capangan, Mt. Province, Benguet	Jose L. Segundo SS No. 01-0113499-8	December 27, 2001
	Fely Lumbag Anita	Bokowkan Rd., Baguio City Unknown		
32)	Estrella Serrano	Unknown	Ernesto M. Serrano SS No. 03-2380023-3	November 30, 2001

-----Nothing Follows-----

(PDI - Mar. 16, 2002)

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www.jobmarketonline.com

Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
Department of Budget and Management

INVITATION FOR BID

Loan No. : 1396-PHI(SF)
IFB No. : ICHSP-2002-001TE

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Department of Health has received a loan from the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** towards the cost of the **INTEGRATED COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES PROJECT (ICHSP)**, Department of Health (DOH) and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the supply and delivery of Telecommunications Equipment.
2. The **Department of Health (DOH)** desires to procure the Goods described and itemized herein through International Shopping in accordance with the applicable Guidelines of the ADB, and now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders from member countries of ADB for the supply and delivery of Telecommunications Equipment.

SCHEDULE OF BID ACTIVITIES:

ACTIVITIES	DATE	TIME
Issuance of Bid Documents	**March 18, 2002**	
Deadline of Issuance of *Bid Documents*	**April 29, 2002**	
Pre-Bid Conference	**April 16, 2002**	10:00 AM
Deadline of Submission of Bids	**April 30, 2002**	10:00 AM
Opening of Bids	**April 30, 2002**	10:00 AM

3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information on the bid form and inspect the bidding documents at the **Office of the Procurement Service - Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM), RR Road, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila, Philippines.**

   Complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by any interested eligible bidder at this address upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **FIVE THOUSAND PESOS (PhP5,000.00) in cash.** For foreign bidders, cost shall be **ONE HUNDRED FIFTY US DOLLAR (US$150) plus mailing fee of FIFTY US DOLLAR (US$50)** in the form of a bank draft issued separately to the PS-DBM.

   A pre-bidding conference will be held on the scheduled date at the **Conference Room of Procurement Service - Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM), RR Road, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila, Philippines.**
4. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the amount of not less than two percent (2%) of Total Bid Price and must be delivered in accordance with the Instructions to Bidders on or before ***deadline of submission of bids***, and will be publicly opened at the above stated time and date at the **Conference Room of Procurement Service - Department of Budget and Management (PS-DBM), RR Road, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila, Philippines.**
5. The **Department of Health and Procurement Service - Department of Budget and Management** reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason to waive any minor defects or infirmities therein and to accept such bid as may be considered advantageous to DOH and to local health units.

(Sgd.) **ESTANISLAO C. GRANADOS, JR.**
Director, PS-DBM

(PDI - March 16 & 17, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON GOOD GOVERNMENT
REGIONAL OFFICE NO. 8
TACLOBAN CITY

INVITATION TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) invites interested parties to participate in the sealed bidding for the lease of the ground floor of the People's Center and Library as venue for "Summer and Fiesta Bazaar and Trade Fair" from **May 15, 2002** to **July 15, 2002**, located at Real St., Tacloban City.

The bidding guidelines will be available from PCGG Office, Asset Management Department, 3rd floor, IRC building, 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City and at the PCGG Regional Office, Nipa Hut, Jones St., Tacloban City, starting **March 18, 2002**. For inquiries, please contact Darwin Altea Tel. No. 7260034 and Renor Dauag Tel. No. (053) 3213413.

Bids will be received, opened and tabulated after their submission at 10:00AM on **April 2, 2002** in the presence of the bidders at the PCGG Office, Asset Management Dept., 3rd Flr., IRC bldg., 82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.

(Sgd.) **RENOR O. DAUAG**
Officer-In-Charge
PCGG, Region 8

(PDI--Mar 15, 16, 17, 2002)

LRTA BID BULLETIN
No.: 02-002
ITB No. 02-020-02

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) hereby announces the revised schedules for the bidding for the

CONTRACT FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE LRT LINE 1 SYSTEM

as follows:

Issuance of Bid Documents	:	**March 20, 2002, Wednesday**
Pre-bid Conference	:	**April 5, 2002, Friday, 10:00 A.M.**
Deadline of Submission of Bids	:	**April 26, 2002, Friday, 10:00 A.M.**

Bid documents can be obtained from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat at the Ground Floor, Administration Bldg., LRTA Compound, Aurora Blvd., Pasay City, during regular office hours on March 20, 2002 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00).

LRTA reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of its bids, and will entertain only such bid/s established to be most advantageous to the LRTA.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. MELCHOR M. ALONZO**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--March 16, 2002)

BUREAU OF TRADE REGULATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

NOTICE TO ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRANTS

PURSUANT TO SECTION 12(A) OF DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 15 SERIES OF 1990, THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY THROUGH THE BUREAU OF TRADE REGULATION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION, CANCELS FROM THE RECORD ALL BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATIONS WHICH EXPIRED AS OF **SEPTEMBER 30, 2001 EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 2002.**

UNDER THE BUSINESS NAME LAW (ACT NO. 3883), AS AMENDED, OWNERS OR PROPRIETORS SHOULD RENEW THEIR BUSINESS NAME REGISTRATION UPON EXPIRATION THEREOF.

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT SERVES AS A FORMAL NOTICE TO ALL CONCERNED.

FOR STRICT COMPLIANCE.

(Sgd.) ATTY. MARIA TERESA ARAO-MAHIWO
Director

(PDI - March 16, 2002)

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Immediate restoration of Banawe rice terraces urged

THE WORLD-famous 2,000-year-old Banawe rice terraces has been on the list of World Heritage Sites for seven years now. Fortunately, efforts to conserve the terraces are coming in from the international community.

In December 2001, the Bureau of the World Heritage Committee in its 25th session held in Helsinki, Finland, expressed its commitment to support the Philippines to "overcome the difficulties faced in maintaining the fragile cultural resources of this property."

In the same convention, the Banawe rice terraces was included in the World Heritage list to make available necessary human and financial resources, to draw international technical assistance, and rally the necessary political will and public support in favor of the Banawe rice terraces' conservation.

Antonio M. Claparols, president of the Ecological Society of the Philippines (ESP) and International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) regional councilor, urges the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to make the necessary representations to reverse the deterioration of this cultural heritage.

Claparols says the continuing deterioration is mainly due to overtourism, climatic changes, soil erosion, and mismanagement.

The Banawe rice terraces, where human land use has been in balance with the mountainous environment for centuries, are extremely fragile. A report by the Reactive Monitoring Mission noted that approximately 25 to 30 percent of the terraces are now being abandoned, resulting in a shift in the relationship between human land use and environment. The Mission also reported unregulated development and erosion that continues to threaten the heritage landscape.

The long-standing offer from Unesco World Heritage Centre "to remain at your (Philippine government) disposal to provide every possible support to assist your government in working out a long-term comprehensive conservation plan aimed to ensure a sustainable program for safeguarding this important cultural landscape" still stands.

PFIZER STUDY ON SEXUAL ATTITUDES, BEHAVIORS

Building on a strong history of research and the growing interest in sexual health, Pfizer recently held a media forum on the Pfizer Global Study of Sexual Attitudes and Behaviors, which provided members of the media with unique insights into the factors that influence people's views toward intimacy and relationships. Results of the study will guide the development of educational materials for both consumers and professionals to facilitate an open dialogue about sexual health. Shown is Dr. Juliano K. Panganiban, urologic surgeon and editor-in-chief of the Philippine Journal of Urology, with Dr. Jose Albert C. Reyes III, urologist and president of the Philippine Society for the Study of the Aging Male (Phissam), Dr. Sonia C. Rodriguez, psychiatrist and chair of the department of psychiatry of the UERM-MMC, and Dr. Romeo A. Divinagracia, cardiologist and president of the UERM-MMC.

NEW PARTNERSHIP

Cresta Del Mar owners Francisco Joaquin and Marilyn Joaquin recently signed a contract with Genesis Hotels and Resorts Corp. (GHRC) on the management of the resort-hotel in La Union. Also signing with them are Miguel G. Cerqueda, GHRC president and Chito O. Silerio, Cresta Del Mar's general manager. Cresta Del Mar is the fifth property under the GHRC helm along the league of other managed properties—The Pearl Manila, Astoria Plaza, Atrium Hotel, and Sunrise Holiday Mansion. GHRC furnishes the required logistics and systems of a property engaged in the hospitality industry.

ABS PORTALWORX STORE LAUNCHED

Active Business Solutions Inc. (ABS), a certified solutions partner of Oracle (Phils.) recently launched Portalworx Store—a pioneering solution that allows the self-service creation and maintenance of multiple e-commerce websites. The launch at the Peninsula Manila's Spices Pavilion was attended by members of the management of the country's leading banks, ISPs, and other service providers. Shown (from left) are Ariel Roda, managing director of ePLDT; Larry Chew, vice president of Union Bank; Manny Dizon, chief technology officer of ePLDT; and Alden Basbas, channels manager of Oracle Philippines.

Giordano unveils kids' wear for 2002

IT'S ALMOST summer time. Kids are going to get around and become more active than ever once again. To keep them looking good when they're having fun, Giordano Junior presents a new line of clothing designed especially for active kids.

Check out a variety of colorful tops, pants and jackets from Giordano Junior, in colors and designs that reflect your child's cheerful and dynamic personality. Cool crewneck ringer tees and denim skateboard shorts for the hyperactive kids, and ¾ sleeved football tees designed for more comfort and ease of movement. And for those outdoor-enthusiasts-in-the-making, the Giordano Junior cycle tee over a pair of helicopter pants for cool, rugged fashion.

Mix and match skateboard shorts or active work pants with long sleeved double layer tees topped with colorful nylon vests or windbreakers, and top off your kid's sporty look with a G ball cap.

Children have very active lifestyles. And because they love to play around and engage in all sorts of challenging physical activities, it's important for them to wear clothes that don't restrict their movements. They need clothes that are not just fashionable, but also comfortable to wear and made of some of the most durable material.

Whether playing outdoors or simply hanging around with the family, Giordano Junior is the perfect fit for every fun-filled day: hip and colorful, yet durable and comfortable. Just the way summer should be. Visit Giordano at Edsa Mall, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center and get that summer feeling.

ECCP SUPPORTS HOME & GARDEN

The European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and H&G International, a division of Leverage International, signed the contract for Home & Garden Asia 2002. This is the international exhibition on home and garden goods to be held from Sept. 19 to 21 at the World Trade Center, Metro Manila. ECCP will recruit European companies who are engaged in the manufacture of home and garden products for export to Asia to join Home & Garden Asia 2002. Shown from right are Elaine Garcia-Gatchalian, project manager of ECCP, Henry J. Schumacher, executive vice president of ECCP; Robert A. Sanchez, president of H&G International, and Rolland A. Sanchez, vice president of Leverage International.

Product FILES

Dunkin' Donuts offers free tickets to 'Ice Age'

SELECTED Dunkin' Donuts outlets in Metro Manila and Davao offer free tickets to the adventure movie "Ice Age". Dozen donuts buyers get the chance to win two premiere night tickets, free donuts or Coca-Cola products via the "Ice Age" "Pick-A-Prize" promo which runs from March 6 to 19.

INTEGRATED BANKING SOLUTIONS FOR PVB

Philippine Veterans Bank has selected Misys International Banking Systems Inc. (Misys) as its preferred supplier for a comprehensive, integrated banking solution to support PVB's extensive banking operations. The acquisition of Misys' Equation, Opics and Trade Innovation software applications is intended to enhance the Bank's operational efficiency and improve service delivery to its clients. PVB's chair Emmanuel V. de Ocampo (third from left) shakes hands with Misys International Banking Systems president K.K. Grover after signing the contract, as PVB and Misys International Banking Systems officials look on. Shown are (from left) are PVB director Antonio A. Balgos, PVB president and CEO Ricardo A. Balbido Jr., Misys International Banking Systems sales director Hank Vos and Misys regional operations manager Eileen Ong.

Girls rule at Narra Club's summer 2002 program

NARRA, the club for girls aged 9 to 17, has lined up fun-filled activities for its Summer 2002 program, and features creative ideas for leisure and learning during this summer break.

Sure to keep the active girls occupied are underwater hockey lessons with Marlyn Lilles and Gigi Santos of the Philippine Underwater Hockey Confederation, and swimming courses under the expert guidance of swimming coach Jenny Guzman.

For the budding chefs, highly trained food and beverage operations managers Emi Mendoza and Ria Antiquiera-Castrillo will conduct a yummy and hands-on cooking seminar.

Chesie Galvez, thespian, with a Masters in Performance Art from the University of London, will conduct a theater workshop for all Lea Salonga wannabes.

The drawing and painting sessions under London-trained artist Christine Amador will inspire artistically inclined young girls.

Street jazz dancing with renowned dance diva Venus Basas is a must for all dance enthusiasts.

Aspiring band members may choose to take piano, drums, or guitar lessons.

These affordable summer courses and other exciting treats will begin on April 1 and will be held at the Narra Club premises, equipped with state-of-the-art classrooms, demonstration rooms, and swimming pool.

All interested parties are invited to attend the open house and orientation day on March 23, Saturday, 9:30 a.m. Courses are open to members and non-members.

The Narra Club is located at 109 M. Alvarez Avenue, Talon I, Las Piñas. For more information, call 806-7260 or 806-7273 and look for Eden or Vissia.

Narra is a project of People Engaged in People's Projects Inc. Foundation and the Kalinangan Youth Foundation (Peppi-Kalfi). The activities in the Club of spiritual and doctrinal nature are entrusted to Opus Dei, a Personal Prelature of the Catholic Church.

BITS Clips

SWI run gets boost

THE SLIMMERS World "8K Fun Run Towards Health and Fitness" slated on March 17 got a big boost with four major sponsors to make the event a truly prestigious run. They are Dole Singles, Manly Sportswear, Sustagen Premium and Kellogs cornflakes. The run will also be supported by Gardenia Bread, Lactacyd, Nestle Taho and Yogurt, AIG Credit Card, Squibb Natural Vitamin E, and specially participated in by Carnation Calcium Plus, Newtex, Kotex, Bengay, Café Puro, Bomba Energy Drink, Imedeen, Cellasene, Addlite Coqio, Adidas, Happydent Chewing Gum and Mizuno. The sporting event, which will start and finish at the Greenhills Shopping Center at Ortigas Avenue, is organized by Slimmers World International, the ultimate in fitness and slimming. At stake is a total cash prize of P35,000 for the top three male and female finishers. Supporting organizers are Mandaluyong and San Juan cities, the PNP-TMG, the Philippine National Red Cross, Sports Medicine Association of the Philippines, and Spectrum Communications.

DRB-FNCC employees' reunion

PREPARATIONS are in full swing for the "grand reunion" of former employees of the DRB Marketing Corp. (DRB)-First Nationwide Credit Corp. (FNCC), to be held today, March 16, at the Bel-Air Village Gym in Makati. Registration starts at 9:30 a.m. DRB and FNCC were the country's largest appliance marketing and appliance sales financing companies in the '50s and '60s, and set the trend in providing Philippine households a full range of electric appliances and furniture. The get-together will also mark the formal induction of the DRB-FNCC Foundation Inc. Call Cesar Leonardo (525-1227, 338-8236) or Nene Quintos-Lichauco (895-4408, 899-6509), or fax 899-9612.

Metro South Jaycees billiard tourney

THE METRO South Jaycees will be holding its billiard tournament dubbed "Otsohan", an 8-ball billiard friendly competition among its chapters to be held at the Cactus Bar and Restaurant, Libis Avenue, Quezon City at 2 p.m. today, March 16. Invited to grace the tourney is 2002 Philippine Jaycees national president Mabel Villarica-Mamba. The Metro South Jaycees is headed by its national vice president Anton Sheker. The billiard tourney is a joint project of the Manileña and the Cainta Jaycees headed by Bing Domingo and Eugene Daga.

Cherry Foodarama celebrates 49 years with raffle draws in 2 branches

THE PHILIPPINES' pioneering supermarket—Cherry Foodarama—celebrated its 49th anniversary grand draw in both of its branches along Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong City, and at Congressional Avenue in Quezon City.

Dubbed "Shoppers Power", Cherry's grand raffle was held on Valentine's Day with invited guests from the Department of Trade and Industry Mila I. Robles, Rosario M. de Leon, Mercedes P. Castro and Eliseo Placido, who supervised the draw, and representatives from the Chinese-Filipino business community.

Cherry Foodarama supports the government's consumer advocacy program in efforts to uplift the economy, through the "Everyday Low Prices" theme.

Cherry's grand draw winners were Susana V. Francisco of 46 A. Luna Street, Mandaluyong City, and Josefina M. Bartolome of Road 20, GSIS Village, Quezon City. They each won a brand new Kia Rio 1.3 Notchback.

Other major winners were Dina Irader and Fredderic Padaton, who won 29" Kolin color TVs, while Rudy Pecdasen, Wilson Co, Alma S. Tayona, and Nonilon Maralit each won Kolin Window Aircons.

NEW employees stretch themselves to relax during the initiation ceremony of Japan's supermarket operator Ito-Yokado Group at a hotel in Tokyo Thursday. Due to the prolonged economic stagnation in Japan, Ito-Yokado Group lessened the job openings to some 680 this year, compared with more than 1,000 in the previous years. AP

IMF sees economic risks despite growing optimism

WASHINGTON—Despite growing optimism about the outlook for the global economy, it faces a slew of risks including bloated household and business debt levels,. a possible stock market crash and a very weak Japanese economy, the International Monetary Fund said on Thursday.

In its inaugural Global Financial Stability Report, the IMF sought to gauge the risks facing the global economy, which is widely expected to recover moderately this year after falling into a recession last year.

While economic forecasters are growing ever more optimistic and recent data from the United States and elsewhere have bolstered that sentiment, there remain many risks in the financial system that could lead to a more dismal outcome.

Among them are historically high levels of household and corporate debt in industrialized nations, which could mean that consumer spending could be subdued and business investment muted in the months ahead, in turn crimping a global recovery.

Equity markets may also be overly optimistic in their expectations for corporate profit growth in the coming quarters, and if those earnings fail to materialize, stock markets could crash accordingly.

The report said that with markets expecting a rapid improvement in corporate earnings, "If this turnaround does not materialize, there is a risk of a market correction." *Reuters*

Japan output slide casts doubt on gov't optimism

TOKYO—Japan's industrial output was sharply revised down on Friday, flying directly in the face of the government's recent upbeat economic assessment.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) said output at Japan's factories fell a revised 1.5 percent in January from a month earlier on a seasonally-adjusted basis, compared with a preliminary one-percent fall.

A day earlier, the government upgraded its official view of the economy in its monthly report, saying the worst could be over for some sectors of the economy and citing industrial production as an area showing signs of bottoming out.

"I think the government jumped the gun," said Kazuhiko Ogata, senior economist at HSBC Securities Japan.

"It's true that the US economy is recovering. But Japan's domestic environment is still woeful, and it's doubtful if a pickup in exports alone could make up for that."

He said METI's forecast for a 4.7-percent jump in February manufacturing output, the core component of industrial production, could prove too optimistic. Preliminary figures for the data are to be released on March 28.

"It seems the stock market has priced in a sharp rebound in output, so it could be disappointed if the February figures are not so hot," Ogata said.

Tokyo's Nikkei share average was hovering near Thursday's closing levels in late trade on Friday but is nearly four percent off seven-week highs set on Monday.

Fewer Americans seeking claims, business inventories building up

WASHINGTON—Fewer Americans seeking jobless aid, and US businesses are building up their inventories, the government's latest data show, adding more evidence that the world's richest economy is on higher ground.

The number of workers lining up last week for first-time state unemployment benefits edged down to a seasonally adjusted 377,000 from 380,000, the Labor Department said in a report showing a continuing downward trend in the number of jobless workers, which began at the start of this year.

Adding to that brighter employment outlook, separate figures from the Commerce Department showed companies unexpectedly boosted their inventories in January, anticipating better times of increased demand from consumers and businesses.

"I think that we are even more conclusively in a recovery," said economist Mark Vitner of Wachovia Securities in Charlotte, NC. "It's really hard to deny the fact that the economy has taken a turn for the better."

It was the 10th consecutive week that initial jobless claims remained below the key 400,000 level that analysts consider recessionary. *Reuters*

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...a dutiful son
...a loving brother
...a great friend
...a caring co-worker

on his

40th Birth Anniversary

The schedule of Masses will be at the following churches:

San Agustin Chapel ..... 7:00 AM
Dasmariñas

St. Alphonsus de Liguori ..... 6:00 AM
Magallanes

St. John Bosco ..... 12:15 PM
Pasay Road

Our Lady of Lourdes ..... 6:00 AM
Tagaytay

We, the members of Louie's family, request all his loved ones, relatives, friends and pious readers to join us in prayer for him.

We would like to thank everyone, who in any way or another, became a part of Louie's short but meaningful life.

MARIA HONRADE MERCADO

"Ka Angge"

Widow of **Macario Macasaet Mercado** (†April 1, 1973)

PNB Best Entrepreneur Awardee, 1973 and 1991
Lipa City Government Awardee - Best Entrepreneur, 1991
President, Mercado Trading Corporation
President, M. Mercado Properties, Inc. (Estate & Home Managers, Inc.)

Peacefully joined the Lord of March 13, 2001 at the age of 81.

Uneducated but learned, she and her husband, thru sheer guts and hardwork, obtained a P3,000.00 loan from PNB in 1950 using a borrowed title as collateral, and went on to establish a thriving coffee business, earning her the title "Coffee Queen."

She and her husband's industry served as an inspiration to her children.

Her bereaved children **Joe** and **Lia Lopez, Theda** and **Rene Guce, Efren** and **Menchie Yrure, Nilda** and **Oscar Gozos, Amy** and **Lucien Sayuno, Roel** and **Marivic Galsim, Elsie** and **Honeyboy Sosa**, and **Myles** and **Suzette Leyesa**; grandchildren, great grandchild, relatives and friends mourn her passing and pray for her rebirth to eternal life.

Her remains lie in state at the Mercado Compound, 121 Mataas na Lupa, Lipa City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 20, 2002 at Eternal Garden, Lipa City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Cathedral de San Sebastian Lipa City.

We, the family of the departed, request prayers for the repose of her soul.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness with which the Lord, the just judge, will reward me on the day and not only me, but all those who have longed for his glorious coming" — 2nd Timothy 4:7-8

Praise be the glory of God as we commemorate the blissful journey of our beloved "Nanny". Loving mother, devoted wife, she will live forever in our hearts...

Esperanza Remulla Dominguez

of Imus, Cavite and Baclaran, Paranaque
who was born on January 14, 1932
and died peacefully under the grace of the Lord last March 10, 2002.

Her husband of 50 years, **Francisco P. Dominguez**; and eleven children, in laws and grandchildren, **Danny Dominguez** and **Esther Mendoza-Dominguez**, their children **Carlo, Aisa, Nina, Felicia** and **Abby**; **Aida Dominguez-Cristobal** and **Ruben Cristobal**; their children **Christopher, Brian** and **Adrian**; **Atty. Evelyn Dominguez**; **Albert Dominguez** and **Doris Paz-Dominguez**; their childen **Dianne, Regine** and **Aileen**; **Merlin Dominguez-Bautista** and **Wilfredo Bautista**; their children **Francis, Marian Grace** and **Wilmer**; **Francisco Dominguez Jr.** and **Josephine Lising-Dominguez**; their children **Franz** and **Isabela** and his children **Patricia** and **Pocholo**; **Imelda "Mel" Dominguez** and her children **Miguel, Paulo** and **Charinez Alejar**; **Alexis Dominguez** and **Evelyn Cruz-Dominguez** (of New Jersey, USA) and their children **Daniel** and **Krizzia**; **Raul Dominguez** and **Girlie Frias-Dominguez** (of Virginia, USA); **Christine Dominguez**; **Irene Dominguez-Imperial** and **Ginno Imperial** (of Toronto, Canada)

Her brothers, sisters, relatives and friends thank the Lord Almighty for sharing 70 years of her love, understanding and generosity with all of us. We request pious readers to join us in praying for the repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Funeraria Samson, Bayang Luma, Imus Cavite.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 17, 2002 at the Melda, Memorial, Imus Cavite after the 3:00 pm mass at the Imus Cathedral.

In Loving Memory...
First Death Anniversary

ADOLFO R. RIVA

(February 2, 1926 - March 16, 2001)

Holy Masses for his eternal peace and happiness will be offered at the following locations/ churches today, March 16, 2002:

Manila Memorial Park, *Court of Salvation, Sucat, Parañaque* ..... 9:00 AM
St. Michael the Archangel Church, *Oas, Albay* ..... 6:00 AM
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, ... 7:00 AM
13th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City
The Nativity of the Lord Parish, ... 6:00 PM
Ermin Garcia Street, Cubao, Quezon City
Shrine of St. Joseph, *Aurora Boulevard, Project 3, Quezon City* ..... 7:00 PM
Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal Parish, *Project 4, Quezon City* ..... 7:00 AM
Christ the King Church, *E. Rodriguez Sr. Boulevard, Quezon City* ..... 6:00 AM
St. John the Baptist Parish, *Pinaglabanan, San Juan, Metro Manila* ..... 5:30 PM
Mary the Queen Parish, *Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila* ..... 6:00 PM
Church of the Resurrection, *Phase I, BF Homes, Parañaque* ..... 6:30 AM
Church of the Presentation of the Child Jesus,
Phase 3, BF Homes, Parañaque ..... 6:45 AM
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice,
University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City ..... 12:00 PM
Holy Family Church, *Barrio Kapitolyo, Pasig City* ..... 6:00 AM
Immaculate Heart of Mary, *MH Del Pilar, Maysilo, Malabon* ..... 6:00 AM
St. John the Baptist Church, *Tipas, Taguig, Metro Manila* ..... 6:00 AM
Minor Basilica of the Black Nazarene, *Quiapo, Manila* ..... 12:00 PM
The Shrine of Our Mother of Perpetual Help, *Baclaran, Parañaque* ..... 6:45 AM
Parish of St. Augustine, *Baliuag, Bulacan* ..... 5:30 AM; 7:00 AM; 8:00 AM; 5:30 PM

His wife **Lilia**; children **Ruby & Manny Gervasio, Rona Marie, Obet & Mary Ann**; and grandchildren **Lianne, Dino, Jason, Teddy, Gigi, Roald, Reggie, Raiza, Gio & Pao**; request relatives, friends, associates here and abroad, all those whose lives he touched and pious readers to continuously remember him in your prayers.

MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family and relatives of our dearly beloved

DR. FELINO CASTRO PALAFOX, SR.

who was called home by our eternal Father on February 19, 2002 at the age of 84.

convey our deep gratitude and appreciation to all those who were with us, offered Holy Masses, remembered us in prayers, gave donations, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and condolences, visited and kept vigil with us, attended the funeral rites and memorial service, and who in countless and immeasurable ways condoled with and comforted us in our moment of grief.

The Family of the late

ATTY. MANUEL RAS BUSTAMANTE SR.

Former Director III of Commission On Audit
Announces the Demise
Born: June 7, 1934
Died: March 11, 2002

At the age of 67, he is survived by his wife **GLORIA AGUIRRE BUSTAMANTE**; his children **ODILON, MA. VICTORIA, GISELA, MANUEL JR, EMMANUEL, EDWARD** and **MARK**; his son-in-law **WILLIAM**; his grandchild **JAIMEE**; his sisters **CORAZON, MILAGROS, RAMONA, MARILOU**; his brothers **ANDRES (†), ANTONIO (†) MARCIAL, DOMINADOR JR., JOSE** and **SALVADOR**.

His remains now lie in state at Chapel C of Cebu Rolling Hills Memorial Chapels, A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City. Novena and Mass Vigil is celebrated every night at 7:00 p.m. at the chapel.

On Sunday, March 17, 2002, a requiem Mass at 2:00 p.m. will be celebrated at the Chapel and interment will follow at Cebu South Memorial Garden Lawaan I Upper Mojon, Talisay, Cebu.

We ask the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of the soul of our beloved.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
1. Copy of Death Certificate
2. Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

THE CONGREGATION OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY (CICM)

requests your prayers for

REV. FR. THEO BANDSMA, CICM

born in Bloemendaal, North Holland, on December 26, 1922, he died in Quezon City on March 14, 2002, at the age of 80 years.

He served in various capacities as a missionary in Cervantes, Bagulo, Kapangan, Tuguegarao, Las Piñas, Kabugao, Bauko, Conner, Maddela, and Villaverde.

His remains lie in state at the CICM Provincial House until March 16; at the Villaverde Parish Church, Nueva Vizcaya until March 18, where a memorial Mass presided by Bishop Ramon Villena, DD will be celebrated at 8:00 AM; and at the Home Sweet Home Chapel in Baguio City until March 19, 2002.

Interment will be on March 19, 2002 (Tuesday), at the CICM Cemetery after the 9:00 A.M. Mass of the Resurrection at Maryhurst Seminary, Baguio City.

PLEASE PRAY TO THE LORD FOR HIS ETERNAL REPOSE.

Emilia (Miling) Ramos

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 11, 2002 at the age of 92.

Her bereaved children **Irenita, Juanita, Teresita, Natividad, Evangelino, Max** and **George**; sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, grandchildren and great grandchilidren request the pious readers to pray for the repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Real St., Ternate, Cavite.

Interment will tentatively set on March 23, 2002 at 2:00 p.m.

On the occasion of the 96th Birth Anniversary of

DR. FEDERICO C. SUNTAY

Please accept our deepest gratitude for all of you who were with us and offered prayers and condolences during our time of loss. We ask those of you whose lives he touched with his generosity and undiscriminating charity, for your continued prayers.

Papa, we know that you always care. We know that your constant prayers have helped us overcome great difficulties. Please continue praying for us and for the success of the projects and programs that you and Mama have inspired, launched, or envisioned. We love you, PAPA, and we will keep on loving you and praying for you.

The family of the late

DON FEDERICO C. SUNTAY

of Hagonoy, Bulacan, Cavite, Mindoro, and Baguio City

Children **Nenita** and **Emil**; son-in-law **Jess**; grandchildren, **Ian**, **Brian**, **Ana**, and **Rica**.

RITA TOLENTINO RIVERA

of Project 4, Quezon City & Zamboanga City

Died on March 14, 2002 at the age of 71.

Her bereaved children **Pilar & Jun, Joy & Anne, Lito & Nerl, Ronald & Queenett**; grandchildren, brother, sister & sisters-in-law request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel 12-A La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 17, 2002 after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz and will be transferred at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

SAMUEL "SAMMY" F. VERANO

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 14, 2002 at the age of 66.

His remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Park, Chapel 2, Marikina City.

Interment will be on March 18, 2002, (Monday), at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

CATALINA "DAYLYN" B. SANDRINO

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 10, 2002

Her loving husband **Ed**; children **Edalyn** and **Patrick**, parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and the HKI Country Director and Staff request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence at #30 Libya St., Greenheights Subdivision, Phase V, Nangka, Marikina City.

Interment will be on Sunday morning, March 17, 2002.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have ever-lasting life."
John 3:16

I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with Loving kindness;
I will build you up again...
Jeremiah 31:3-4

EMILIANO D. MAGDANGAL, M.D.

(Widower of Lionila Batac Magdangal)

Received his FINAL HEALING on March 14, 2002.

Emil was a doting father to only child **Karen**; a devoted brother to **Fred** & **Alice** (†), **Remy** & **Iling, Precy** & **Pabling** (†), **Naty** & **Mario**; a caring uncle to his nephews and nieces, a loving relative and a loyal friend to many.

Doc had a special bond with **Ginia** (†); a lasting link with **Coba** & **Carmen** (†), **Rodjo** (†) & **Marivic, Ramon, Rene**, and **Vien** & **Raymond**.

The vessel of the spirit is at the St. Joseph Chapel, Pinaglabanan Church, San Juan until the Sunday Mass on March 17, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. and will be cremated at Manila Memorial Crematorium, Sucat, Parañaque at 11:00 a.m.

Please say a special prayer to accompany his spirit on the journey home.

We've added another dignified service to keep the memory of your departed loved ones.

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
CREMATORY SERVICES
ON CALL 24 HOURS A DAY
143 G. Araneta Avenue corner Kalinaya Street, Quezon City
Telephone Nos.: 749-3806 to 11 • 712-3001 • 743-6502
743-6505 • 743-6508 • Fax No.: 712-2782

101 years

Message of Thanks

We, the family of

METRODORA "Tuding" C. CORPUZ

who joined her Creator on March 8, 2002

would like to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City; Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOQUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451; 522-2128; (0917) 434-9976
CAPITOL MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
1305 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City; Tel. 732-0309; 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad,
Mandaue City, Cebu; Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City; Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City;
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
DAYAO FUNERAL HOME
#2 Bayani St., Galas, Quezon City;
Tels. 740-2683; 781-3705; 781-3688; 413-9400; 715-5594
DALLUAY MEMORIAL SERVICES
#42 Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City
Tels. (047) 222-3605; (047) 811-1066; (047) 222-4512; (047) 224-2014
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City;
Tel. 894-5932 to 34
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila;
Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522

FUNERARIA PANGILINAN
Santo Entierro cor. P. Burgos St., Lourdes Sur, Angeles City
Tels. (045) 888-2959 ; (045) 322-5247
PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City;
Tels. 646-1725; 646-1730
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOQUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City; Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602
FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011;
Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603
FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite;
Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Sucat, Parañaque City; Tels. 825-1296; 825-1291
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Tel. 722-2730; Cell (0917) 5660136; (0917) 5660145
Manila #23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila; Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kalinaya St., Quezon City; Tels. 749-3806 to 11
79 Nagulilan Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City;
Tels. 895-1011 to 19
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS & CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577

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Marcos Hiway, Antipolo, Rizal; Tels. 645-1855; 682-0209; 682-0210
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Arellano St., Dagupan City
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 515-6529; 522-8783; (0919) 348-7131
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Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
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Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220
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Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City;
Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels. 852-8226; 852-7284
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 372-5064; 410-9286/87
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7646; 843-1601; 845-4836
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila;
Tels. 522-8846; 522-9438; 400-5394

The mighty mushroom

By Massie K. Santos
Contributor

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

THEY'RE found on pizzas, mixed into every possible dish from omelets to casseroles, and even have a fast-food chain named after them. They are also the object of dirty jokes, are a slang for drugs and come from the same family that causes things like athlete's foot. The latter should come as no surprise since not all of the more than 30 varieties are edible.

Some people are turned off by their appearance, while others just can't get past the taste. Still, they're more popular than anchovies (better known as *dilis*) when it comes to pizza toppings.

Not bad for something that can't be classified as animal, vegetable or mineral, as everyone had learned back in grade school. Those who remember their basic biology will recall learning about the six kingdoms (animal, protist, etc.), with the mushroom belonging to the fungi kingdom.

People tend to associate fungi with mold, and think of strange growths between their toes, funny smells, decomposition, rot, things turning a nasty shade of brown, and so on.

Given that they can be grown in compost piles, why aren't more people turning away from mushrooms as a food source? That's a question worth saving for a sociology or anthropology class paper.

Even more interesting is the fact that unlike mold, the medicinal properties of mushrooms in general haven't been fully explored. This is surprising since antibiotics such as penicillin were discovered decades ago in molds, which are also fungi.

But that's all changing now.

Mushrooms, and fungi in general, have become key players in several different fields of research.

Mushrooms and AIDS

Mycologists (mushroom experts) and medical researchers alike are currently studying how mushrooms can help clean the environment, be used to combat chemical warfare, help in the fight against AIDS, and possibly treat cancers. With alternative medicine becoming more widely accepted in this day and age, researchers are only now understanding the scientific basis for several treatments that were handed down in folklore and myth.

Reishi mushrooms have long been known to contain anti-inflammatory compounds called triturpinoids, which can be used to treat arthritis patients.

Fleshy mushrooms, such as porcinis and shiitakes, have been found to contain substances that can reduce tumors and boost the immune system. The latter makes the mushroom a fascinating study for AIDS researchers, who have found that the drugs in AIDS cocktails cause severe side effects, including high cholesterol levels. Mushrooms are already low in fat, but perhaps some varieties contain compounds that can naturally bolster patients' immune systems and have no side effects.

Studies have also shown that antibiotic compounds are present in several mushroom varieties, and some scientists believe the mushroom is beneficial to humans because the two species share a common ancestor. When one realizes that half of a banana's DNA is homologous to human DNA (as discovered during work on the Human Genome Project), the notion of being kin to a mushroom really isn't that far-fetched.

Clean the environment

But antibiotic compounds aren't the only things mushrooms have going for them.

Mycologists Paul Stamets and Dennis Desjardin, among others, have found that mushroom beds can be used to decontaminate the environment in a process called mycoremediation. Because mushrooms naturally feed off decomposing material and can be grown in it, they are extremely good at breaking down the hydrogen and carbon bonds in oil and gasoline, whose chemical structures are very similar to their natural food sources.

Tests have shown that fungus-treated contaminated areas could be completely reclaimed—and it might not be unthinkable to actually eat the mushrooms that grew there. Of course, the latter would only be advisable if edible mushrooms were used rather than the poisonous ones.

The only problem now is getting this idea more widely accepted as an alternative to landfills and incinerating garbage, although the technology could be used in conjunction with these other processes. As with all new technologies however, acceptance on a global scale could take a while.

Mushrooms are making their presence felt, not just in the kitchen but under the microscope as well. Since they're not that hard to grow—they usually pop up after a hard rain—it does not seem unlikely that they may one day be as plentiful as the roaches that are supposed to inherit the earth when all humans are gone.

Mushrooms, however, will make sure the earth will not be the post-nuclear holocaust environment everyone fears. Rather, it may be far cleaner than the world of today.

(The author may be contacted at massie@massie.com.)

Genetically modified crops: actual and potential benefits

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

(Last of three parts)

LAST week we discussed the common issues raised by consumer and environment groups regarding GM foods. These have been researched in great detail by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), which as a body has stood firmly in support of the responsible use of biotechnology. In its paper "Genetically Modified Crops: Biosafety and Food Safety Issues and Concerns," it listed several benefits. I have the group's permission to quote the information given below.

Benefits from the first-generation transgenic crops have been documented. The use of insect-protected (Bt) crops such as corn, cotton and soybean is said to lead to reduction in the application of pesticides.

Partial data published in Science (Nov. 26, 1999) show that on one million hectares of Bt cotton grown in 1998, chemical pesticide use was reduced by 450,000 kg and yield was increased by 39 million kg worth $92 million. No chemical pesticide was used on 800,000 hectares of corn plants. Yield increase in corn averaged 7 to 8 percent and grain quality was noted to be high, since undamaged grains were not prone to microbial infections.

Herbicide-tolerant crops allow farmers to use less hazardous chemicals and reduce the need to till the soil to ward off grass, thus reducing soil erosion.

As for potential benefits of GM crops, these include:

- Better nutritional quality. Think about rice with Vitamin A and iron, corn with high lysine and tryptophan, vegetables with more beta-carotene and lycopene, legumes with higher sulfur-containing amino acids and sweet potato with higher protein content.
- Engineering pest or disease resistance in important crops. Think about rice, corn, sweet potato and others that are especially important to developing countries like ours.
- Edible vaccines. Low-cost immunizations can be provided for developing countries. For example, a diarrhea-fighting banana is now at the clinical trial stage. Think also about a vaccine against gastroenteritis implanted in corn feed for hogs.
- Antibodies engineered and produced in plants. Expressed antibodies in potato, tobacco and rapeseed were stable and active, and could be increased.
- Environment protection. Think about crops that can extract and detoxify environment pollutants such as heavy metal. However, this research has been hampered by a lack of basic knowledge of the molecular mechanisms involved in the uptake and storage of inorganic substances in plants.
- Environment-friendly crops. These include crops that produce less toxic residues, such as corn with low phytate. Phytate complexes phosphorus, and this means that the latter cannot be released into the environment. At present, a large amount of phosphate is excreted and contributes to water pollution.
- Renewable resources. Renewable and biodegradable alternative polymers to replace plastics and other petrochemical products can be produced.

So what can we conclude? After thorough studies, the NAST has come up with the following conclusions:

- Regulatory mechanisms to ensure biosafety of GM crops are in place and operational in countries involved in research and development and commercialization.
- Food safety assessment protocols have been established in countries that have approved the commercialization of GM crops as food or feed.
- GM crops available at present have undergone voluntary and required risk assessment studies during field tests and were found to be safe to humans, animals and the environment.
- In the Philippines, the regulatory mechanisms for biosafety aspects at the research and development level under the NCBP have been established. Regulatory mechanisms for commercialization and food safety aspects still have to be done.
- Potential benefits of modern biotechnology in the areas of food, health, environment and industry are imperiled by strong opposition from the anti-biotech sector.

The NAST also gave the following recommendations:

- More balanced public discussions on the issue should be promoted, with increased participation by consumers, farmers, policy makers, scientists and industry.
- Government agencies should fast-track the establishment of regulations and mechanisms for the commercialization of and food-safety concerns on modern biotech-derived products.
- More field trials of different commercially available transgenic crops should be undertaken to enable appropriate risk assessment studies under Philippine conditions.
- The government should promote science-based evaluation of the products of modern biotechnology to assess their food safety to humans and animals.
- The government should strengthen its regulatory agencies to enhance and modernize manpower and logistic capabilities needed to regulate modern biotech-derived products.
- The government should strongly support research and development and the use of modern biotechnology to develop local biotechnologies and their products.
- The potential benefits of any technology should be weighed against its risks and the science-based protocols utilized in their evaluation.

For a detailed copy of the NAST paper from which this series was excerpted, contact the NAST at the 2nd floor of the PSHC Building, DOST compound, Taguig, Metro Manila, tel. nos. 837-2071 local 2170 to 2173, telefax 837-3170, or e-mail: nast@pacific.net.ph.

Oily stool shows efficacy of antiobesity drug

MEDICAL experts say the oily stools or "gastro-intestinal events" accompanying treatment with the antiobesity drug Xenical are proof that the medication is working. Increased oil in the stool indicates one is not eating the right kind of food, signaling the need to cut down fat intake.

Xenical does not act on the brain nor cause palpitations. Its elimination of dietary fat teaches one to change eating habits. With elimination of dietary fat, Xenical also reduces waist circumference.

Temporary inconvenience

"Patients must accept the oily stool phenomenon as a necessary but temporary inconvenience," says Dr. Amelia Catalan-Brillantes, a cardiologist at the Perpetual Help Medical Center in Biñan, Laguna. "They have to accept the reality that some treatments are less than 100 percent pleasant. The benefit of this temporary inconvenience is better health"

The cardiologist adds that there is a misconception that one has to use adult diapers when on Xenical because of oily stools. "On the contrary, this happens only on the first few days of medication. When one adopts a low-fat diet, one will learn to control fat intake. After a while, one's body will adapt to the drug, which teaches one to eat the right kind of food. Decreasing oily stool means one is succeeding in improving eating habits," says Dr. Catalan-Brillantes.

Oily problem

She explains that the oil that leaves the body during the course of treatment is the unabsorbed fat "carried out" of the intestines by the medication. Fat, mostly in the form of triglycerides, is ingested with every meal. After passing through the stomach, the fat is broken down by lipases from the pancreas to make it available for absorption in the intestine.

"A lipase inhibitor like Xenical inhibits the action of pancreatic lipases in the small intestine. By blocking the activity of lipase, the digestion and the subsequent absorption of triglycerides are significantly decreased," says the cardiologist.

Facts about aspirin

A PERSON may experience a heart attack or stroke that may be due to an unhealthy lifestyle. A heart attack occurs when the heart does not receive enough blood supply due to a blocked artery inside the body, resulting to the destruction of heart tissues. This is also true with a stroke: the brain's blood supply is cut off, and part of it dies.

How do arteries get blocked? If a patient has a high bad cholesterol level, plaque forms inside the arterial wall shrinking its passageway and eventually the artery is blocked. Also, the plaque formed may tear off, travel through the arteries and the smaller blood vessels and create blockage, which causes clot formation.

This is where acetylsalicylid acid, commonly known as aspirin, comes in. Aspirin has been in our household for over a hundred years, helping people get rid of fever and body pains.

In recent years, however, aspirin has been discovered to have another beneficial effect. It has the ability to prevent the formation of platelets and consequently reduces clots in the arteries and blood vessels.

Doctors have widely prescribed aspirin for patients who have suffered a heart attack or stroke, and it was also used for the secondary prevention of stroke.

Aspirin has an antiplatelet property that prevents clots from building up. Free of clots, blood may flow unimpaired, averting blockage that could cause a heart attack or stroke. Extensive studies have consistently shown that aspirin offers substantial protection against fatal or nonfatal heart attack or stroke.

The case of the leukemic gymnast

MEDICAL FILES

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

IT was supposed to be an ordinary practice for Grace M., a 12-year-old promising gymnast. But as she was about to do her floor exercise routine, her nose bled profusely and she collapsed suddenly. She was rushed to a nearby hospital. Extensive examination including a battery of tests done by her attending physician showed she had acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL).

The news hit Grace and her parents like a bolt of lightning. "If it's any consolation, ALL, or what is commonly known as childhood leukemia, is like the common colds in the cancer family. It can be treatable nowadays," the doctor tried to reassure them.

Overproduction

ALL begins when an immature blood cell in the bone marrow, known as a progenitor cell, leads to an overproduction of blood cells. These leukemic cells are considered clone cells because they have similar characteristics. They divide without control and fail to respond to the signals that tell them to stop. Because these cells have a longer life than normal cells, they rapidly accumulate and literally fill up the bone marrow.

Eventually, leukemic cells destroy and replace cells that produce normal blood cells. They may also accumulate in a patient's lymph nodes, spleen and elsewhere in the body. At the time of diagnosis, up to a trillion leukemic cells may be present in the patient's body.

Grace M. started gymnastics when she was barely 4. Since then, she practiced regularly under the supervision of a trainer who believed in Grace's talents and skills. Many enthusiasts in the gym where she practiced believed that she could snatch gold medals from the highly touted Chinese gymnasts.

Fateful day

For her part, Grace felt confident that by constantly honing her gymnastic skills, she would one day represent the Philippines in international competitions. But that was before. Everything changed after that fateful day when she was diagnosed to have ALL. Since then, she had one bout of infection after another.

A lack of functional white cells makes patients with leukemia prone to infection. If leukemic cells go unchecked, all the normal blood forming elements are eventually destroyed. The white cells, which protect one's body from infection, platelets, or the clot forming cells, and red blood cells which carry oxygen to the body, are all eventually depleted. The lower number of normal white blood cells depresses the immune system of leukemic patients and makes them more vulnerable to infection than ordinary individuals.

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

Symptoms

The decrease in the concentration of platelets in the blood among ALL sufferers leads to nose and gum bleeding, a tendency to bruise easily, and pinhead-sized red spots on the skin. ALL patients also suffer from anemia, manifested as pallor, weakness or easy fatigability, and shortness of breath.

Other leukemia signs and symptoms, which are frequently overlooked and even taken for granted include fever, chills and other protracted or recurrent flu-like symptoms; weakness and fatigue; loss of appetite and/or weight; swollen or tender lymph nodes, liver or spleen; purple skin blotches and easy bleeding or bruising; swollen or bleeding gums; headache, vomiting and irritability; and bone or joint pains.

A simple blood test such as a complete blood count (CBC) can provide the first evidence that a person has leukemia. As in Grace's case, immature white blood cells called blasts are seen in the blood sample examined under the microscope. A bone marrow biopsy is performed to confirm the diagnosis and determine the type of leukemia. If the patient has headache, vomiting and irritability, the doctor may also check for leukemic cells in the fluid that fills the spaces in and around the brain and spinal cord by doing a tap through the spine at the back (lumbar tap).

Before the advent of chemotherapy, the outlook for patients with acute leukemia was poor with most dying within six months from diagnosis. Modern medicine has changed this dramatically with many being cured.

Aside from chemotherapy, Grace was given transfusions of red cells and platelets because her blood count dropped to dangerously low levels, which may be expected in leukemics but may be partly due to her intensive chemotherapy.

Because of the markedly depressed normal blood-forming cells in leukemic patients, bone marrow transplantation is recommended for relapsing cases in modern centers abroad. The transplanted bone marrow must come from a donor with a compatible tissue type (HLA-matched), usually a sibling or other close relatives. Its cost is highly prohibitive though—costing more than an arm and a leg—which makes it an impracticable option in countries like ours.

Beyond the limits

During the treatment, Grace was allowed by her doctor to perform simple nonstrenuous gymnastics routine so that she would not forget all the techniques that she had learned. Her exuberance and enthusiasm for her sport sometimes overwhelm her and make her go beyond the limits her doctor had set. People who know her can only marvel at her faith and determination.

One time after her course of chemotherapy in the hospital, Grace went to the hospital's playground and performed some exercises with her ball. Balancing her body on one foot, Grace lifted her other leg as high as she could with the knee bent. She then stood still doing the balance routine as if she was being judged in an international competition. Afterward, she giggled and put her ball on top of her hairless head. Although she got tired after the practice, Grace did not seem bothered at all.

The needed boost

During days when her body would not permit her to do her exercises, she surfed the Net and read articles about her favorite Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci. She also loved watching over and over again the taped 1996 Atlanta gymnastic competition where Keri Strugg performed a difficult routine despite having an injured leg tendon. This gave her inspiration and the needed boost to sustain her dream despite her life-threatening illness.

Grace was told by her doctor that she needs further treatment and she has to be closely monitored to keep her ALL at bay (remission), and prevent its recurrence and complications. Despite the side-effects of her treatment, she has consented to whatever it would take to make her well.

Grace has not given up her hopes of achieving her goals as a gymnast. She may have lost her hair with chemotherapy and her body's muscles may have lost their firm tone due to physical deconditioning, but her indomitable spirit remained. And each night as she closes her eyes to sleep, she visualizes that she has just finished a perfect floor exercise routine and waves to an imaginary ecstatic crowd after she is given a perfect 10 in the Olympic games.

(For feedback, e-mail raffymd@i-manila.com.ph)

Total hip replacement: Closest thing to being 'bionic'

By Jose S. Pujalte Jr., MD

Contributor

WHAT is total hip replacement?

It is the most successful orthopedic procedure, better than total knee replacement, in terms of results. In the United States, about 120,000 hip replacements are done every year. Since the hip is a ball-and-socket joint, the artificial parts recreate this. The "ball," or the head or upper end of the thighbone, is made of cobalt-based metal alloys attached to a metal stem. The "socket," or acetabulum, is made of high-grade plastic (polyethylene). In old patients, the parts are "cemented" to bone. This makes early walking possible.

Who get hip replacements?

The most common indication for total hip replacement is osteoarthritis. The burn out stage of osteoarthritis is bone-to-bone contact in the hip. This happens when disease or nature erodes the protective covering of bone ends (cartilage). Osteoarthritis is common after the age of 65. Younger patients who get hip replacements may have inflammatory (rheumatoid) arthritis or joint destruction from accidents, cancer and birth defects involving the hip.

Who may NOT get hip replacements?

Those denied hip replacements are patients with recent or active hip infections. A hip that has been previously fused by disease or surgery with irreparable weakness of surrounding muscles may not get a replacement.

In general, a patient must be strong enough to undergo a two- to three-hour operation. The patient may have other medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension or heart disease, but these should be under control.

BEFORE

AFTER

Why do a total hip replacement?

There are three reasons the doctor (an orthopedic surgeon) will recommend an artificial hip. These are to relieve pain, to restore function and to achieve stability.

As the arthritic hip becomes more painful, the patient will walk less. Even standing will be painful. To move about, the patient will become miserably dependent on canes or walkers. At the end-stage, patients complain of inability to sleep because of chronic joint pain.

Are there alternatives to surgery?

Nonsurgical approaches to treatment start with lifestyle changes such as weight loss and less activity. Activity in the form of exercise that does not further pound on the joints is encouraged. These include stretching and toning exercises. Aerobic activities such as swimming and brisk walking are appropriate in early arthritis.

A food supplement, glucosamine sulfate, has been shown to delay cartilage loss. The latest available medications for arthritis are the COX-2 inhibitors (rofecoxib and celecoxib).

If conservative measures don't work, what else can be done other than joint replacement?

Most doctors agree that the "biologic," or real joint, is preferable to an artificial one and will want to save the hip at all costs.

Other surgeries are suggested with the aim of preserving what is left of viable cartilage or unloading an area of the hip that is already damaged. These are essentially osteotomies, or bone cuts, to reposition the hip joint. Another less attractive, but reliable, operation is fusion.

A solid and nonmoving hip joint will no longer be painful.

What is the usual hospital course in a total hip procedure?

Upon admission, the patient must get a medical clearance. A physical exam and laboratory result will determine if he is fit for major surgery. Total hip replacement patients stay in the hospital for an average of five to seven days.

More often than not, a patient goes home using a walker, taking baby steps with his brand-new hip. Physical therapy to regain strength and painless movement lasts for several weeks.

How long will a replacement hip last?

A well-executed total hip replacement can last up to 20 years. Survival of the plastic and metal parts varies, and they fail for different reasons. However, as a rule, the younger and more active the patient is, the higher the chances of revision (another operation to change parts).

What can go wrong?

As in all surgeries, there can be mishaps in technique and anesthesia. After the operation, there can be wound infection and worse, infection of the hip replacement. These may require prolonged antibiotics and possible removal of the implants.

The textbook infection rate for total hip replacements is one percent. You must be informed of possible complications but in the end, hip replacement, or any kind of surgery, is about trusting your doctor.

Is total hip replacement done in the Philippines?

Yes. The Philippine Orthopedic Association, the professional organization of Filipino orthopedic surgeons, has 386 registered fellows. They can do a joint replacement.

Total hip replacement has been done in the country since the early 1970s. There are more hip replacements performed in the country than knee replacements. One reason for this is that the implants are more affordable.

(Dr. Pujalte is an orthopedic surgeon at the Philippine Orthopedic Center. His contact numbers are 711-4276 and 711-6626, or e-mail JSPujalte@broline. com.)

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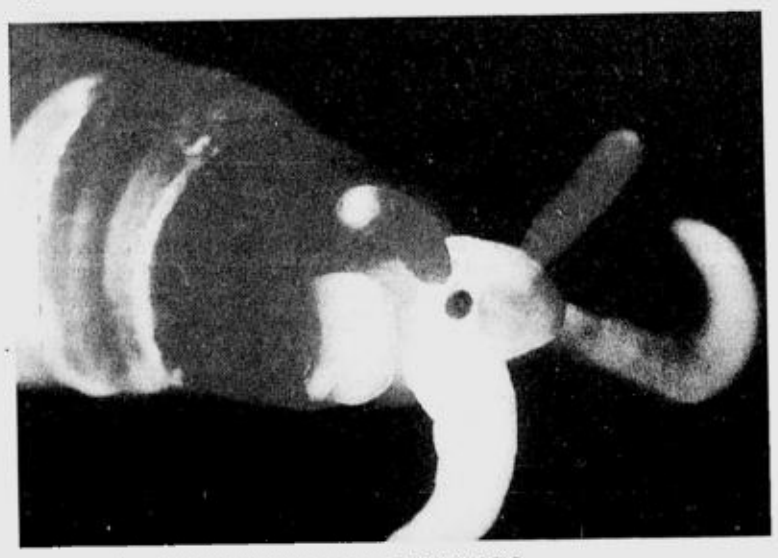

STUNNING UNDERWATER IMAGES

"Shape of Life" is an interesting series on National Geographic Channel, especially if you're fascinated by science. It presents some very in-depth scientific concepts and offers some stunning visual imagery that uses the latest in underwater imagery. This spectacular anthology series will be telecast every Tuesday of April at 9 p.m.

New antibiotic shows promise vs resistant germs

By Charles E. Buban

SINGAPORE—Forget penicillin, sulfonamide or tetracycline. The most successful antibiotics developed decades ago may soon find themselves obsolete if new and drug-resistant strains of disease-causing microbes keep emerging.

Experts who attended the 10th International Congress of Infectious Diseases here said the growing threat of antibiotic resistance should not be underestimated.

Dr. Jae-Hoon Song, chief of South Korea's Division of Infectious Diseases, cited a Libra surveillance report that said there was a global escalation of penicillin resistance.

Libra was a program initiated by German pharmaceutical giant Bayer to study antibiotic resistance, find ways to reduce its incidence and coordinate with global organizations to increase awareness about it, especially among physicians.

In a 2000 report on infectious diseases, the World Health Organization warned that failure to make rapid progress against antimicrobial resistance this decade may make it more difficult and expensive—if not impossible—later.

Respiratory infections

Among the pathogens the Singapore congress focused on were respiratory tract infections, one of the leading cause of illness worldwide. Each year, around seven million people die as a direct consequence of acute and chronic respiratory infection.

The most common bacterial pathogens isolated from a range of such infections were *Streptococcus pneumoniae, Haemophilus influenzae* and *Moraxella catarris*. Resistance to a number of commonly used antibacterial agents, including penicillin, is increasing in these bacteria.

"To prevent the rapid emergence of resistance, high-affinity compounds should be used," said Jae-Hoon.

New drugs

Manufacturers have developed a new class of drugs that shows promise against antibiotic-resistant respiratory infection pathogens.

Moxifloxacin is one such compound that shows lower propensity for resistance compared with other antibiotics. It belongs to a new generation of antibiotics called fluoroquinolones.

The intravenous version of Moxifloxacin is slowly gaining acceptance in the United States, where it will be available initially, for its clinical superiority, shorter duration of hospitalization and higher survival rates among patients.

"With its wide spectrum of activity covering common community respiratory pathogens, Moxifloxacin, both the parenteral and oral form, is highly active against a wide range of gram-positive and anaerobic pathogens," said Dr. Ronals Grossman of the University of Toronto.

The drug, commercially known as Avelox, has been administered orally to over 10 million patients and so far has an unblemished safety record.

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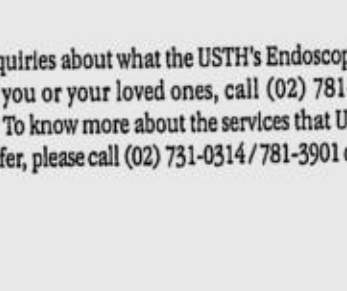

For inquiries about what the USTH's Endoscopy Unit can do for you or your loved ones, call (02) 781-3901 local 2282. To know more about the services that UST Hospital can offer, please call (02) 731-0314 / 781-3901 or 749-9787.

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS HOSPITAL
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SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang • Assistant Editor Stella O. Gonzales

Making motherhood safe for Filipinos

By Tessa R. Salazar

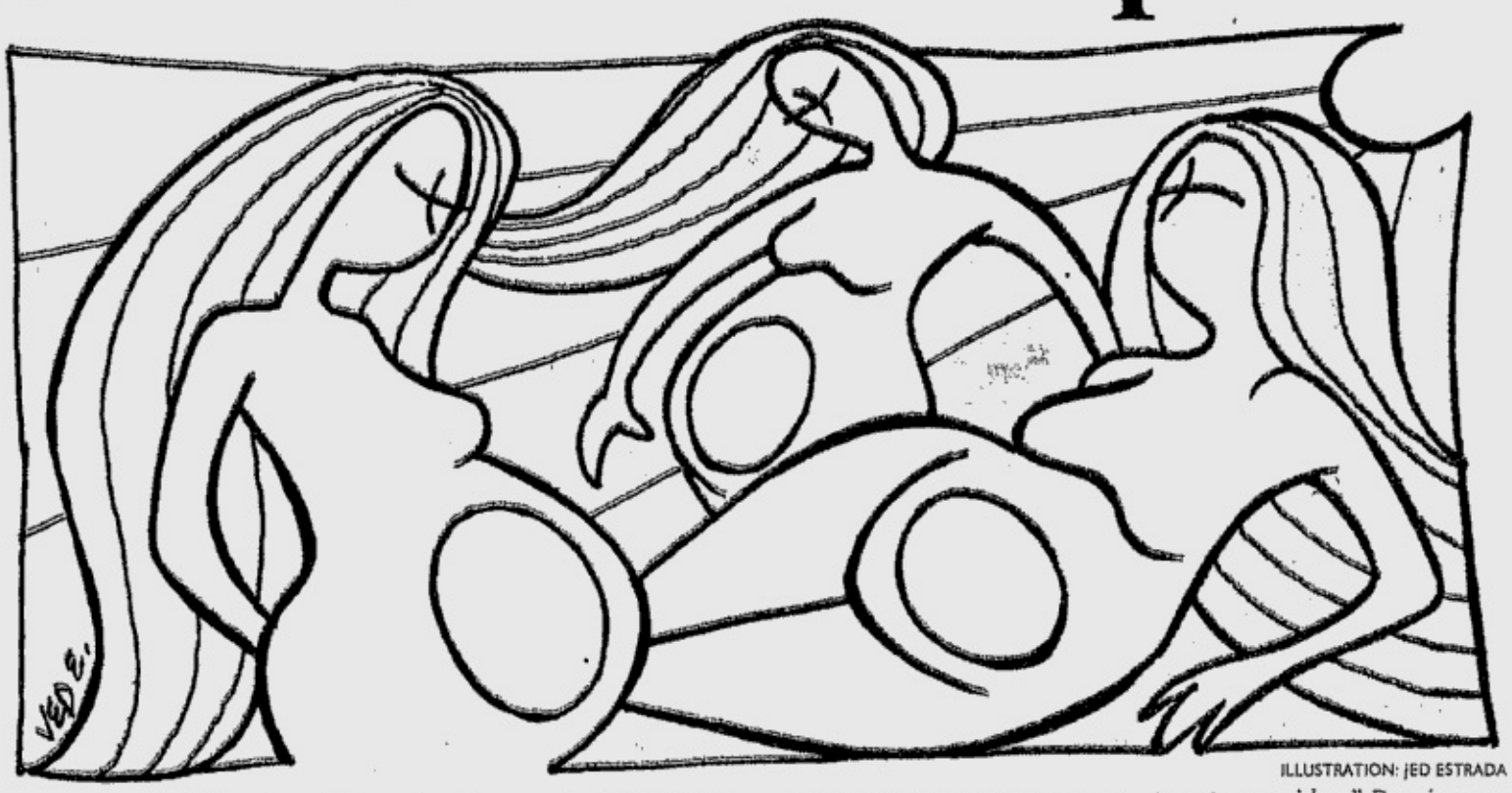


ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA

DESPITE various emerging women's health issues, maternal health continues to be a priority program of the Department of Health (DOH).

One reason is that the Philippine maternal mortality rate remains high at 172 per 100,000 population as reflected in 1998 statistics. The country has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in Asia, with up to 10 women dying every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.

The major causes of maternal mortality include below-standard nutrition (Vitamin A, iron and iodine), lack of prenatal and postnatal checkups, complications during childbirth and infections caused by unsterile home deliveries.

About 66 percent of Filipino births are delivered at home, and only 33 percent of pregnant women receive tetanus toxoid immunization.

Many deliveries are done by trained *hilots,* or traditional birth attendants, while 57 percent are done by skilled workers such as midwives, nurses and doctors, said Dr. Ma. Nerissa N. Dominguez, chief of the women's health and older person's division of the DOH Center for Family and Environmental Health.

Another major cause of maternal mortality is bleeding during childbirth or even postpartum. Hypertension is another cause.

Over 60 percent of all pregnancies are considered high-risk. And the risk factor increases for mothers who are in poor health, who are under 18 or over 35, and whose pregnancies are narrowly spaced. The risk also goes up after the third pregnancy.

Safe motherhood

The Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project supports the government's goal of reducing maternal morbidity and mortality by promoting safe motherhood. It recommends micronutrients for pregnant and lactating women and obstetric supplies and facilities such as OB kits for midwives, traditional birth attendants' kits and home delivery kits for low-income women.

The DOH provides technical and managerial help while local government units are responsible for the actual delivery of the project's services.

"Compared to previous years, our maternal mortality rate has gone down but the figures are not that significant (for us) to claim that the condition of Filipino mothers is improving," Dominguez said.

Health counseling

Dominguez said there is a need for women to be properly counseled during pregnancy.

A quarter of pregnant women in the Philippines suffers from iodine-deficiency disorder. This increases the risk of abortion, stillbirths, miscarriage and infant death. Iodine-deficient mothers might give birth to babies with underactive thyroids and these babies could suffer from retarded mental and physical development.

About 44 percent of women have iron-deficiency anemia. Iron is a trace mineral needed to format red blood cells and produce antibodies to fight diseases. Pregnant women, as well as children, need more iron than usual.

But pregnant and lactating mothers in the country consume only 45 percent of the recommended dietary allowance for iron.

Family planning

The family planning program can be a health intervention for safe motherhood, the DOH stresses. It can reduce maternal mortality rates because proper spacing of childbirth allows mothers to regain strength. (The ideal spacing is at least two years.)

The program, said Dominguez, can also help prevent the recurrence of abortion, which results in health complications.

The present total fertility rate is high at 3.7 children per couple.

"This means four children per couple. Most of our families are not capable of raising more than two or three children. Not all families can access the family planning program. There are unmet needs," Dominguez said.

Despite the implementation of the women's health and safe motherhood project in 77 provinces in 16 regions nationwide in the last five years, there has been no significant reduction in maternal deaths.

"It seems there are other factors to consider," Dominguez said.

This prompted the DOH to conduct a maternal death review study that will look into nonhealth-related causes of maternal deaths. Among others, the study will determine the role of the community in the access of health services.

One problem, Dominquez noted, is the delayed referral to adequate medical services. This is usually caused by the lack or absence of vehicles and ambulances, bad roads and inaccessibility of hospitals.

Eradicating Lymphatic Filariasis-a 20 year goal

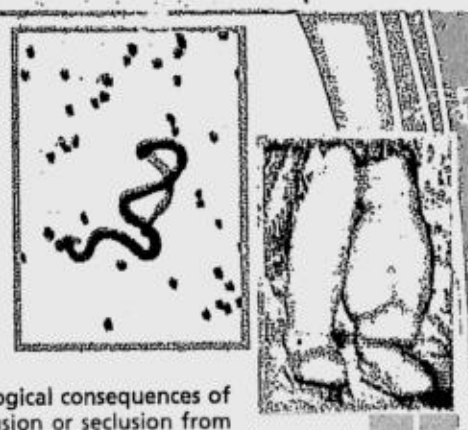
The figure says it all. Lymphatic Filariasis or LF, puts at risk more than a billion people- or one-fifth of the world's population. This revelation has caught the attention of the World Health Organization (WHO) - the biggest health organization in the world- prompting it to launch a serious, massive and encompassing campaign against the disease.

But just what is LF and what measures have to be undertaken to stop its spread?

Lymphatic filariasis, or elephantiasis, is a parasitic disease transmitted by mosquitoes. It develops into the infective stage in a process that usually takes 7 to 21 days. The thread-like worms (filariae) live exclusively in the human lymphatic system that eventually damages it. Tissue damage caused by the worms restricts the normal flow of lymph fluid, resulting in swelling, scarring and infections. It eventually causes the enlargement of the entire leg or arm, the genitals and breasts. Unfortunately, LF thrives in tropical areas where the people at risk are among the poorest in the world.

According to Malcolm Dean, an assistant editor of the London-based newspaper The Guardian, and a writer of health and social policy issues for the past 30 years, third world towns have produced ideal conditions for LF. Open sewerage systems, poor drainage and inadequate housing and health care are the perfect breeding grounds for the disease.

LF is considered the second leading cause of permanent disability among infectious diseases. Studies show over 120 million have already been affected by LF worldwide, 43 million of them seriously. Most of the people affected are living in Africa, the Carribean, South America, India, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands. A primary cause of this increase is the rapid and unplanned growth of cities, which creates numerous breeding sites for mosquitoes that transmit the disease.



Battling LF's unseen effects

Apart from the physical disability caused by LF, an afflicted person also battles the psychological consequences of the disease. Along with the disease comes the shame, stigma and sometimes extreme exclusion or seclusion from society. Although the disease is not fatal, studies show some may even be suicidal if they are not given the much-needed psychological and emotional support. The psychological consequences of the disease can be disastrous. Patients may, as a consequence, lose their jobs, suffer serious sexual dysfunction, forfeit their chances of marriage or face divorce or separation because of this disfiguring disease.

Thanks to government and health workers, concerned people have organized "clubs"directed towards helping LF-afflicted persons. These organizations have somehow alleviated the psychological burden attached to LF. The anti-LF campaign is not only limited to medication, but also educates the persons on proper hygiene like washing, simple skin care and elevation of the limbs at night. These simple procedures not only halt the progression of the disease, but may even reverse it.

The basic strategy in combating LF can be done in two ways: first, stop the spread of infection, and second, find the means to alleviate the suffering of affected individuals.

The global challenge

Last 2000, the WHO, in partnership with GlaxoSmithKline and the Department of Health, started the campaign against LF. The goal is to eliminate the disease in 20 years.

For its part, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) will provide the anti-parasitic drug albendazole until LF is eliminated as a public health problem. This translates to about five billion tablets to be distributed worldwide. Some 83 million tablets are allocated for the Philippines alone. The medicines are turned over by GSK to WHO for distribution to the DOH.

WHO has estimated that there are 206,909 cases of lymphatic filariasis in the Philippines. Locally, the program is being specifically implemented in endemic areas like Regions 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, ARMM, CAR and CARAGA.

Likewise, the DOH and GSK have carried out regional "Filaria Fairs," an information campaign and on-the-spot detection and educational medical mission. Backed by the WHO, DOH and local government units, the fairs were a welcome treat to people mostly residing in the barrios who had to walk miles just to avail of the free medical service. There were also de-worming activities for children and adults.

The challenge to fully eradicate lymphatic filariasis in the Philippines and globally is indeed a daunting task. Twenty years may be a long way to go, but a serious, collective effort is what is needed to completely eliminate the disease.

GSK officials led by president and chief operating officer Robert Ingram (center); regional director for Asia Pacific Andrew Witty, GSK Phils. president and managing director Amado Tadena and vice president for corporate affairs Noel Isberto called on Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to reiterate GSK's commitment to help the government in eradicating Lymphatic Filariasis (LF). GSK will also provide free health insurance coverage to indigent Filipinos through the "Health Pass" program. Also in photo is Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit (right).

GSK president and chief operating officer Robert Ingram (center) turns over an information kit on Lymphatic Filariasis (LF) to Department of Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit. Others in the photo are Amado Tadena, GSK Phils. president and managing director; Andrew Witty, GSK regional director for Asia Pacific and Noel Isberto, GSK Phils. vice president for corporate affairs.

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Flies unleashed AIDS epidemic?

PARIS—Bloodsucking flies may have unleashed the world's AIDS pandemic by transmitting an HIV-like virus from chimpanzees to humans, German biochemists have suggested in a new study.

Many AIDS researchers suspect that the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) was an animal virus that leapt the species barrier to humans at some point in the first half of the 20th century.

The likely culprit, they believe, is a monkey or an ape, which can contract a cousin to HIV called simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV).

A common theory is that SIV mutated into HIV in a chimpanzee or monkey in west or central Africa, which bit a human or was eaten uncooked. The virus then spread among humans through sexual contact.

But researchers Gerhard Brandner of Freiburg University, Werner Kloft of the University of Bonn and Manfred Eigen of the Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry in Goettingen have a new theory.

They suggest that the transmitter between ape and human could have been a bloodsucking insect called the stable fly, the weekly magazine New Scientist reported. The research is published in full in a German journal, Naturwissenschaften.

"Apes are traditionally hunted in Africa and are offered for sale in open-air meat markets," they say.

"The bloody carcasses are regularly covered with blood-feeding flies, possibly including the stable fly."

If the flies sucked virus-tainted blood from the chimps, they could have transmitted it when they fed on humans, the researchers believed.

The flies scrape skin to make a wound, suck up the blood and then regurgitate some of the blood on skin the next time they feed. If that blood is deposited on an open wound, the virus can be handed on.

The stable fly is unusual because there are many species of bloodsucking insects but very few pose a risk of passing on a virus. Some, like the mosquito, inject saliva through one tube and suck up blood through another, and so do not transmit blood-borne viruses.

Others regurgitate the blood that they suck up, but the vast majority of them digest the blood first, a process that usually kills the virus.

But in 1992, Brandner and Kloft discovered that the part of the gut where the stable fly stores the blood for regurgitation did not have digestive enzymes.

That means HIV and other viruses survive there intact and could in theory be handed on to someone else. ***AFP***

Malaysian drug giant enters Philippine mart

By Charles E. Buban

A MALAYSIAN pharmaceutical company announced its formal entry into the Philippines when it set up its local subsidiary last week.

The incorporation of Hovid Inc. (Philippines) signals the entry of more affordable drug products into the country.

Hovid Malaysia is in the top 10 ISO-compliant firms supplying generic medicines worldwide. The company is one of the few Asian firms accredited by the World Health Organization and is a supplier to Unicef.

Hovid produces nearly 300 pharmaceutical products including paracetamol, mefenamic acid, antacids, antibiotics, anthelmitics, steroids and tranquilizers.

"Our entry signifies our faith in the Philippine economy. Although we have been here for quite some time, marketing a few of our products, setting up this subsidiary will definitely enhance our presence here. This is our investment and we intend to bring in more products," said David Ho, Hovid Malaysia president, during the incorporation rites in Ortigas.

If the economic conditions become more favorable, Hovid may set up a manufacturing plant in the country in two to three years, said Ho.

"At present things are a little bit quiet here but once the economy gets moving, we don't want to get left behind," he said.

Hovid exports to over 30 countries and about half of its products are sold in nontraditional markets like Singapore, Hong Kong, Fiji, and African and Latin American countries.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 2002 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY Special

Editor Nestor U. Torre • Associate Editor Edmund L. Sicam

Oscar song category highlights movie work of veteran rockers

Oscar wins revived the lagging musical careers of Phil Collins and Elton John

By Anthony Breznican

LOS ANGELES—Pop stars can turn to the Oscars when they want something besides Grammys on their trophy shelves.

Parallel careers

The competition among Sting, Randy Newman, Paul McCartney and Enya in this year's best movie song category highlights the parallel careers some celebrity musicians are developing in film music. (The other nominee is songwriter Diane Warren, whose song "There You'll Be" from "Pearl Harbor" was performed by country singer Faith Hill.)

"In your wildest dreams you could say, 'Well, one day I'll get nominated for a Grammy.' But an Oscar seems like kind of a long shot," said Sting, nominated for the song "Until" from the romantic comedy, "Kate & Leopold."

STING . Winning the Academy Award seems like a long shot.

Sting has collected some of his soundtrack songs on a compilation album, "Sting at the Movies," and was nominated for his first Oscar last year for "My Funny Friend and Me" from the Disney cartoon "The Emperor's New Groove."

In the notoriously fickle music industry, experts say performing on a soundtrack can give veteran stars unique opportunities to showcase their music to a new audience. The exposure is magnified even more by a coveted Oscar nomination.

Pressure

"There's a lot of pressure on the radio market to find a hot new thing and all these nominees are veterans; they're yesterday's hot things," said Tom O'Neil, author of the book "Movie Awards" and proprietor of the award website Goldderby.com said. "This is a very shrewd way to find an alternative medium."

Oscar wins by Phil Collins and Elton John for songs they performed in the Disney cartoons "Tarzan" (1999) and "The Lion King" (1994), respectively, gave a shot of energy to their lagging musical careers. And Randy Newman, who had hit singles in the 1970s and '80s with "Short People" and "I Love L.A.," is now better known for his movie music than solo recordings.

All three of Newman's Grammys are for film music, and this year he's in the Oscar category for best song with "If I Didn't Have You" from "Monsters, Inc." His score for the animated feature has another nomination.

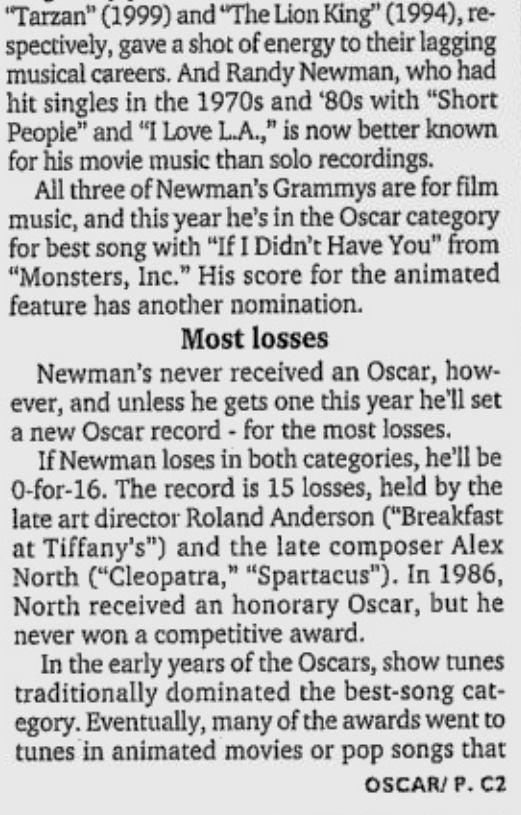
Most losses

Newman's never received an Oscar, however, and unless he gets one this year he'll set a new Oscar record - for the most losses.

If Newman loses in both categories, he'll be 0-for-16. The record is 15 losses, held by the late art director Roland Anderson ("Breakfast at Tiffany's") and the late composer Alex North ("Cleopatra," "Spartacus"). In 1986, North received an honorary Oscar, but he never won a competitive award.

In the early years of the Oscars, show tunes traditionally dominated the best-song category. Eventually, many of the awards went to tunes in animated movies or pop songs that

OSCAR/ P. C2



Telenovelas give young second leads Cheska and Roxanne a chance to shine

By Jocelyn Valle

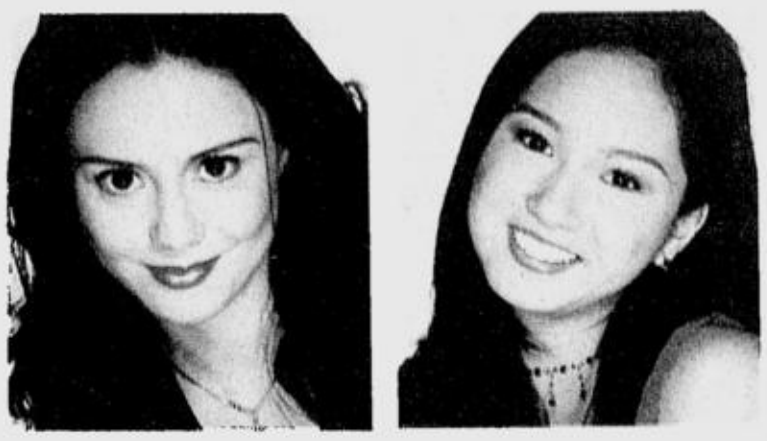
THERE has been a steady decline in local film production for the past few years. Actors are therefore thankful for TV networks that continually churn out big-budgeted and star-studded *telenovelas*, which give them both stable income and regular exposure.

New stars

Soap operas are especially helpful in discovering new stars, revitalizing dormant careers and giving secondary leads a chance to shine. Cheska Garcia and Roxanne Barcello fall under the third category and they are grateful to be part of Channel 7's "Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga" as young *contravidas*.

Cheska plays Charity, the jealous wife of Bobby Andrews's character, while Roxanne is Eloisa, the envious sister of main protagonist, Cecilia (played by Tanya Garcia).

Sixteen-year-old Roxanne, though, rues that she gets calls from her young fans, telling her how bad she is in the soap. "I just explain to them that it's just a role," she tells us, her sweet face belying her on-screen nastiness.



CHESKA AND ROXANNE. Young *contravidas*.

"I was hesitant at first to play *contravida* but I gave in after learning that Eloisa is not really an evil character. There's a reason why she hates Cecilia."

Roxanne got scared even more when she finally accepted the project because it's a detour from what she does on "Click," a GMA 7 program that dramatizes youthful adventures, joys and disappointments.

Pageant

Prior to that, it's been singing and dancing. At age seven, she joined the Miss Virginia Princess pageant in the USA, where she was born and lived till she was 12. "But I lost because I looked too Oriental," she recalls, sighing. "Since then I took my singing lessons seriously."

In 1998, Roxanne copped the second place in the Second Metropop Star Search, where "Click" director Mac Alejandre spotted her.

Roxanne considers her role in "Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga" as a real acting challenge. "So I watched a lot of Tagalog movies, particularly the ones with Gladys Reyes, and I practiced how to raise only one eyebrow for a month," she offers, adding that she's a fan of *telenovelas*.

Cheska, on the other hand, felt that her stint on Jolina Magdangal's old TV show, "Labs Ko Si Babes," prepared her well for her current role.

Passion

Unlike Roxanne, Cheska isn't much into *telenovelas*. "But I watch a lot of Tagalog movies," she points out, adding that it's a passion that she shares with younger brother Patrick Garcia.

While the siblings both started as commercial models, Cheska had always turned down offers to appear on TV shows, until the old "Gimik" came along in 1997. Afterwards, she became part of ABS-CBN's Star Circle, Batch 3, and acted as guest in most of Channel 2's programs.

Cheska shares that she's happy with the way her career has turned out, though she would also like to host a lifestyle program. She's not aiming for stardom, anyway. And she's also busy with other things, like earning a degree (and later on, a license) in Interior Design.

Besides, she's happy with what the biz has done to her personality. "I've become more sociable and," she pauses, grinning, "open-minded. It's really true what they say: 'Don't judge a book by its cover.' I've learned to be patient, to understand people, and to grow up!"

How to succeed at screenwriting without really 'dying'

By Nestor U. Torre

EACH and every year, scores of new writers, most of them products of screenwriting workshops, make their bid to write scripts for local TV and film producers and directors.

Some make it on their first attempts, but most new writers have to suffer the slings and arrows—and meatcleavers—of the TV-film industries before finally getting their big breaks. And there are those who never make it at all.

Survivors

What can new talents do to succeed at screenwriting without really "dying"? Here are some pointers, courtesy of some bruised but otherwise triumphant survivors:

First, make doubly sure that you've got real talent. A number of untalented but well-connected writers have made it in the biz, but where's the honor in that? Everybody knows you've made it not on the basis of what you know, but on whose names you can most resoundingly drop.

So, make sure you have talent, because genuine talent will eventually out. Most people in show biz may have hidden agendas, but some key players are only out to make good films or TV shows, and if they learn that you have talent, they'll seek you out and give you a chance to prove your worth.

Hard taskmasters

How do you make sure that you've got what it takes? Join a screenwriting workshop. Have your initial scripts critiqued by hard taskmasters. Keep revising and improving.

After honing your ability to the max, join a screenwriting contest. Some of those writing tilts are judged by professional filmmakers, so if they like your script, they may opt to shoot it themselves.

That's exactly what happened to the scripts of "Nine Mornings," "Ang Kriminal ng Barrio Concepcion," "Sa Pusod ng Dagat," "Santa Santita" and "Minsan, May Dalawang Bata," and the writers of those scripts have gone on to doing more screenplays for different producers.

Process

Even if your script doesn't win a major prize, it could interest a judge and end up being produced. So, joining contests is a good way to speed up the process of getting into the biz.

Another way is to develop personal contacts with any and all people in show biz who could offer you writing jobs. Some TV shows like "Pirapirasong Pangarap" and "Maynila" go out of their way to help gifted newcomers. In the movies, there are some producers and directors who like working with new writers and helping them develop their abilities.

This is not to say that new writers won't get their share of disappointment and rejection—and more. But, if you have a list of, say, 50 possible contacts, you stand a better chance of getting a nibble than if you contacted only five people.

Rejection

The important thing is to learn not to take rejection personally, and to keep focused on your long-range goal of working productively in the industry. For this to happen, you must know what you're getting into—the cliques and cordons sanitaire that keep newcomers from coming in, the plagiarism, the major changes and quickie production schedules that can ruin a script, etc.

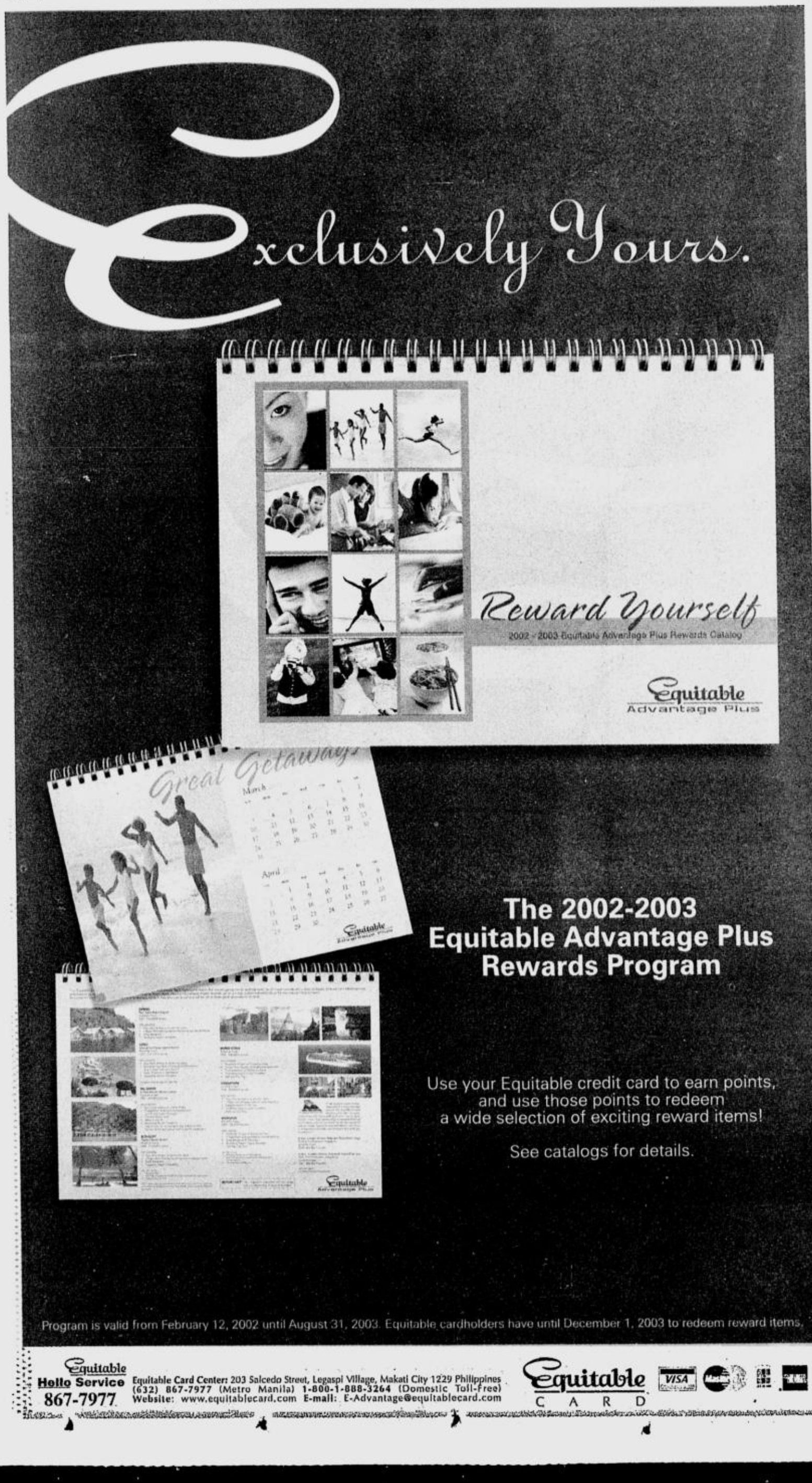
That way, even if some or all of these low blows are aimed at you, you can recover in due time and try again. Indeed, quite a number of new writers have overcome daunting odds and eventually made it as regular TV-film writers.

Fresh blood

Even better, after establishing themselves in the biz, they recommend other new scriptwriters to their producers, and more fresh blood is infused into the languishing industry.

To give up is to "die," an act of feeble surrender that is of no benefit to anybody, other than the cynical people who made things tough for you in the first place.

So, instead of making them happy by giving up, keep plugging away—and, if you really have talent, you'll eventually make it.



Oscar song . . . (From page C1)

seemed to have little connection to their films, like Lionel Richie's "Say You, Say Me" from 1985's "White Nights."

But Oscar wins by Bruce Springsteen for the title song to 1993's "Philadelphia" and Bob Dylan for "Things Have Changed" from 1999's "Wonder Boys" came after those performers worked closely with directors to devise songs that mirrored details of the movies.

Some songwriters savor the challenge of writing music as a companion for a specific story.

"With an album, it's sort of a blank canvas, you can write anything you imagine," said Enya, nominated for "May It Be" from "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring." "But on a film, you have to be influenced by what you're seeing on the screen. It's just something I've always enjoyed."

Unfinished film

The Irish singer flew to New Zealand to see parts of the unfinished film for inspiration. She and her co-writers, Nicky and Roma Ryan, found they could work the epic journey of the sword-and-sorcery tale into an ethereal melody with lyrics written in the film's fictional "Quenya" dialect of the Elves.

"I didn't have that much trouble because my first language is Gaelic and they both come from very old Celtic languages," Enya joked.

She has also written songs that appeared in "Sweet November" (2001), "Far and Away" (1992) and "Toys" (1992).

"Vanilla Sky" director Cameron Crowe screened part of an early print of the film for McCartney because he hoped the former Beatle would allow him to use a song from his new album "Driving Rain."

Folk song

Four days later, McCartney recorded a new acoustic guitar folk song—titled "Vanilla Sky"—that

MCCARTNEY. Previously nominated for "Live and Let Die" title track.

alludes to Cruise's petulant playboy character and the comeuppance he receives.

McCartney told the filmmaker: "Get to know me . . . because if you ask me for something, I might just come through for you."

"He knew just how to shroud the story in a metaphor," Crowe said. "A lot of times a pop or rock star won't know how blatant they should be. It might be a song you really love, but it won't work if it just repeats the story of the movie."

After commissioning the Smithereens to write a theme for his 1989 romance "Say Anything," Crowe said he had to reject their song, "A Girl Like You," because the lyrics outlined the plot too closely.

McCartney has a previous Oscar nomination for the title track to the 1973 James Bond thriller "Live and Let Die."

Special thrill

Although many of Sting's songs have appeared on movie soundtracks, most of them weren't written with a movie in mind. But now the 50-year-old musician said he gets a special thrill creating something inspired by a film.

OSCAR/ P. C3

Oscar song . . . (From page C2)

In the case of "Kate & Leopold," he said he was struggling in a post-Sept. 11 depression when he screened the time-travel love story about a 19th century nobleman (Hugh Jackman) who falls in love with a 21st century New Yorker (Meg Ryan).

The musician, who lost a friend in the World Trade Center attacks, said writing a guitar waltz for the movie helped pull him out of a "numbness" he might otherwise have wallowed in.

"It was a delightful, fragrant breath of romance," Sting said. "It was exactly the kind of antidote I needed." ***AP***

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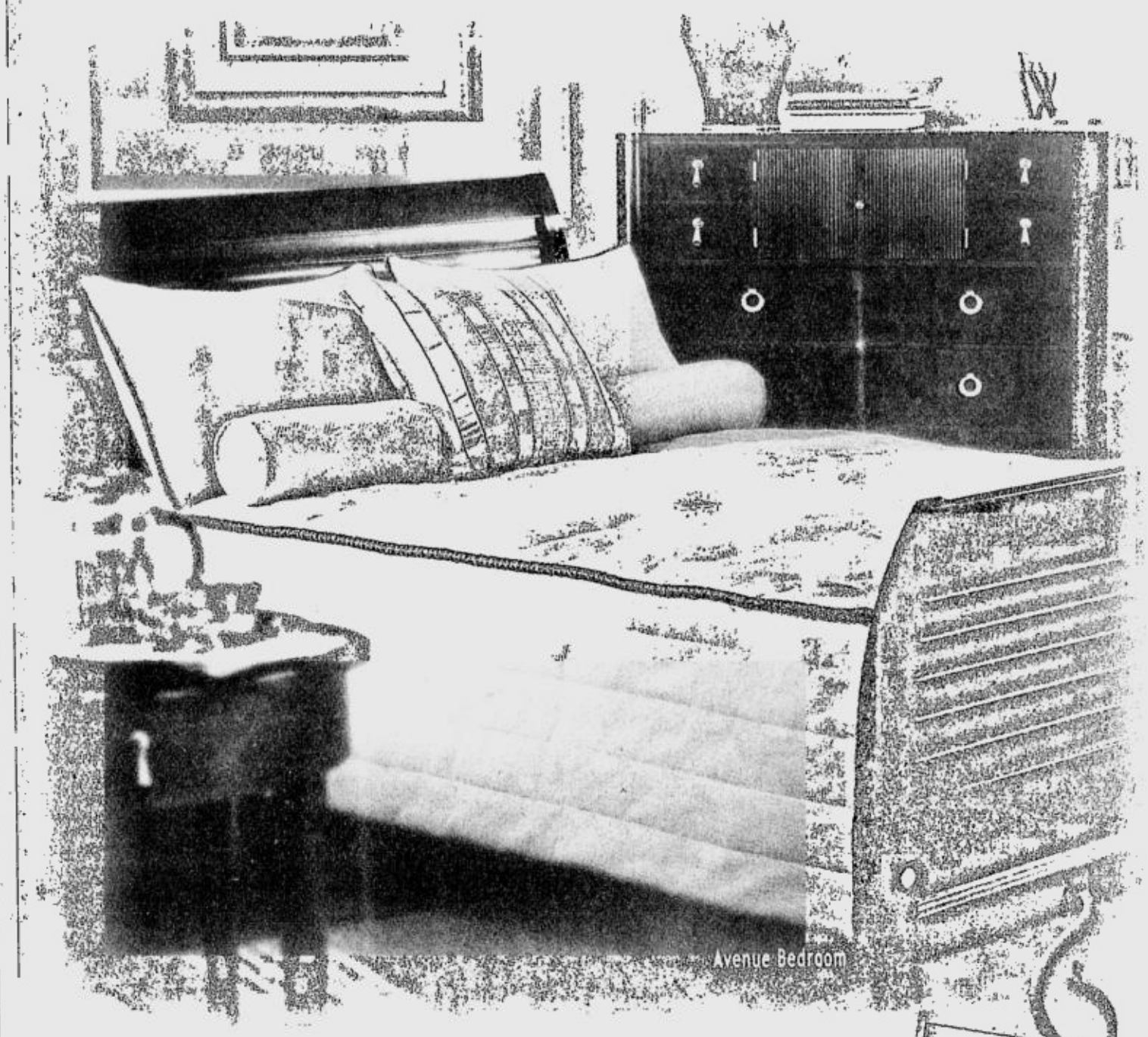

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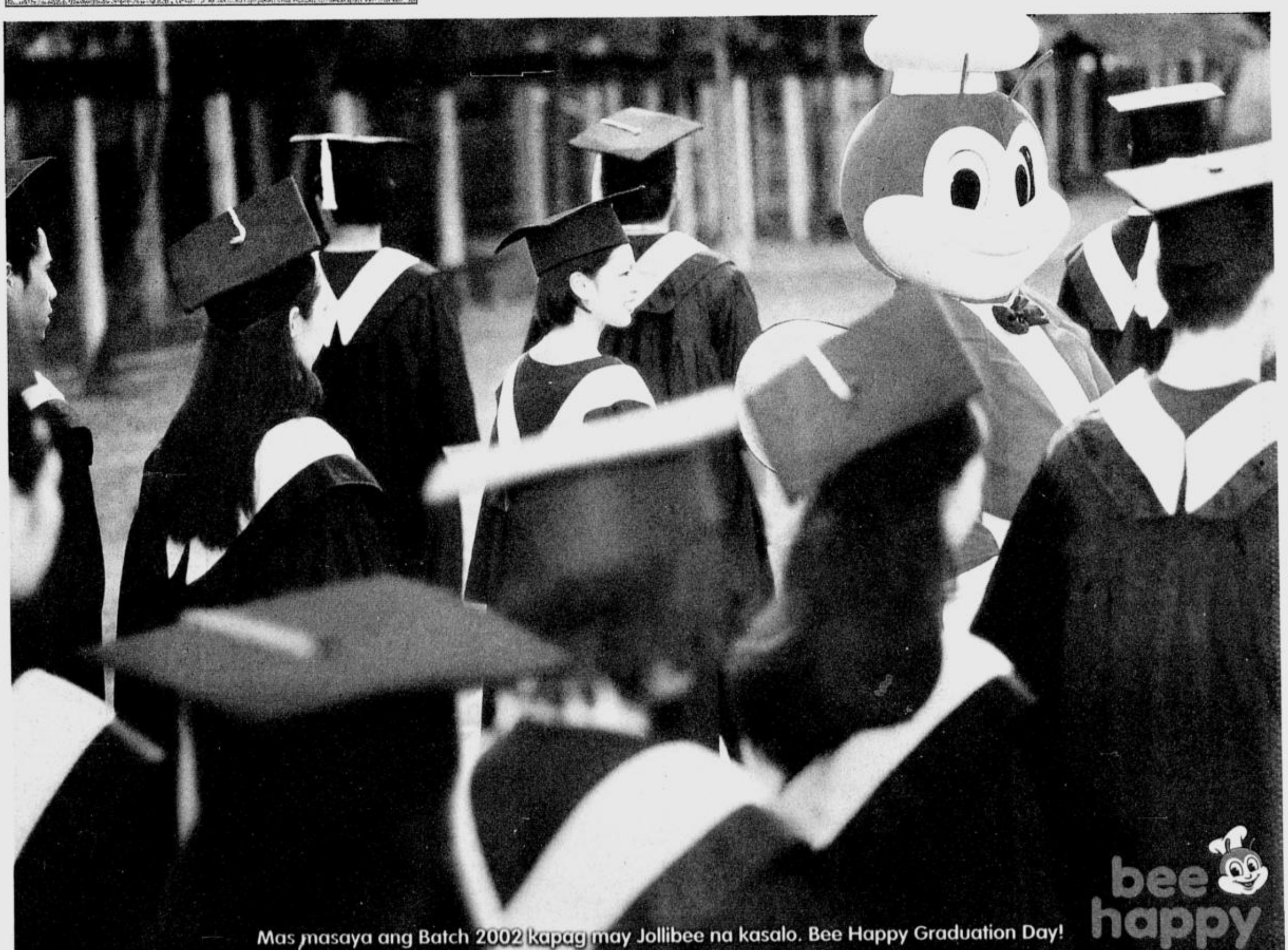

SPECIAL PROJECT

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MYRA 300-E WOMAN

Since its relaunch in 1999, Myra 300-E has focused its efforts on being a staple in every woman's life and lifestyle. Vitamin E, after all, is medically proven to be beneficial to the skin, hair, body and overall health – some of the major concerns of today's woman.

For the past 3 years, Myra 300-E has been defining who the Myra 300-E woman is. What personality best typifies the brand? Who is she? Is she the fashionable celebrity? The accomplished executive? The active health buff? Who is the Myra 300-E woman?

In 1999, Myra 300-E was positioned for women who always like to be on the go. She was defined as sexy and beautiful and lives an active life to keep the body healthy. Jessica Kolontar and Nina Ricci Alagao typified the brand, making the 90s Myra 300-E woman one who looks her best at her sexiest.

In the beginning of the millennium, in 2001, another facet was added – and this was her being more health conscious. With increasing focus on overall health and well being, the Myra 300-E woman realized the importance of having healthy cells for healthy bodies. She also became more fashionable. Celebrating her health, beauty and sexiness in the way she dresses and carries herself.

[e]

Giving face to these ideals were the F-girls: Angel Aquino, Cher Calvin and Daphne Oseña.

Now, the Myra 300-E woman adds another dimension to her already colorful personality. She is healthy, sexy and beautiful – that's a given. But she has another quality that makes her perpetually aglow, making her look blooming every hour, every day.

This is inner beauty.

The Myra 300-E woman's inner beauty may come from a lot of things: serenity, happiness, accomplishment, even involvement in a worthy cause. Aside from these factors, inner beauty also comes from healthy cells. Because if you do, you really glow. And this year's Myra 300-E woman has all that, and she's no other than Ms. Eula Valdes.

She is the Myra 300-E woman. One who strikes you physically with beauty, sexiness and health. And now, she'll be even more admired because of inner beauty.

THE MA

SIGNING-UP. Eula signs up as the newest f Myra 300-E in the presence of Myra 300-E Product D Alvin So (right), Product Manager Eva Datol (left) and P Assistant Mayni Dizon (standing, leftmost). Joining th members of DY&R-Alcantara: (standing from left) Muñoz - Account Director, Marlaine Gatchalian - Caster, Maya Estrada - EVP & Client Services Direct Ernest Lao - Senior Account Manager.Also prese Cornella "Angge" Lee - Eula's Manager,

EULA: THE NEW FACE OF MYRA 300-E

First, there were Jessica Kolontar and Nina Ricci Alagao, two of the most popular faces in commercials and the ramp. Nina later went on to win the Bb. Pilipinas-Universe 2000 crown, representing the country splendidly in the Miss Universe pageant.

Following them were the fashionable triumvirate of local television: Angel Aquino, Cher Calvin and Daphne Oseña – collectively known as the F-girls.

Now, another woman joins the roster of Myra 300-E's endorsers. And she's someone who can be best described as a "woman of power." She is known throughout the country as "Ms. Amor Powers," no other than Ms. Eula Valdes.

Eula signed up as the face of Myra 300-E for its new advertising campaign. One look at her and there is no doubt why she was chosen. At 33, she still remains one of the most beautiful faces in Philippine television and cinema. She has graced practically every magazine cover in the country, and is also in demand as a model. Her physique betrays her age as she still looks undeniably sexy. And an avid health buff, she's actively into sports such as track and field, volleyball and basketball.

But more than being healthy, sexy and beautiful, Myra 300-E chose Eula to be its image model because she best exemplifies the product's new campaign line: "inner beauty."

Eula's inner beauty comes from contentment, a sense of accomplishment and, of course, Myra 300-E.

As Ms. Amor Powers, Eula is now one of the most popular and recognizable faces in the Philippines. By 7:00 pm, most all television sets in the country are glued to their program, all waiting for Eula. Her convincing and powerful performance recently gave her a Best Actress award from the Star Awards for Television.

This makes it easy to understand why Eula is always aglow and blooming these days. Aside from her string of career accomplishments, a more than happy personal life, she also has the help of Myra 300-E to help her maintain her inner beauty.

See Eula's inner beauty in the latest commercial of Myra 300-E. Then, discover your own inner beauty by taking Myra 300-E everyday.

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KING OF INNER BEAUTY

BEHIND THE SCENES.

1. Eula checks out polaroids with the creative team. From right: Lester Morales - Associate Creative Director, Millet Arzaga - Stylist, Jing Monis - Make-up artist & Erwin Triviño - Art Director.
2. Taking a break with clients Mayni and Eva (seated) and Print Producer Ed Belleza (standing, leftmost) during the photo shoot.
3. Eula projects the perfect vision of inner beauty during the TV commercial shoot.

THE INSIDE STORY ON INNER BEAUTY

"Blooming ka ngayon!"

We've all heard this remark more than once in our lives. "Blooming" is that feeling when you're all aglow. You look and feel pretty. You exude sexiness in whatever you do. And when you're blooming, you look healthy, sexy and beautiful, even at the start of the day.

Most people attribute "blooming" to being in love. While this may be true, there is an easier way to always be in bloom. It's what is called "inner beauty." And its what you get with Myra 300-E.

Beauty from within

Inner beauty is one that comes from the cellular level. Healthy cells are the building blocks of healthy bodies. When you have them, your skin becomes smoother, your body is sexier, and your overall health is much, much better.

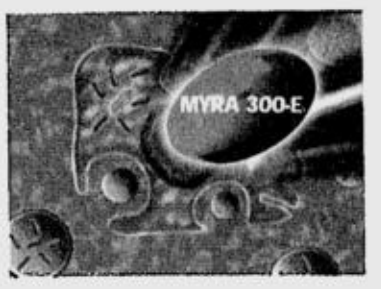
However, everyday things we do can compromise the health of cells. Stress from work, pressure, UV rays from the sun, physical activity, smoking and second hand smoke – all these give rise to the production of harmful free radicals. These free radicals are oxygen molecules that cause damage to cells and tissues. The most telling sign of free radical attack is the loss of energy, leading to tiredness and fatigue. It may accelerate the aging process, causing wrinkled skin and sagging muscles. And worse, it can also cause disturbance to other major organs such as the heart and muscles.

If left unchecked, excessive free radicals may leave you looking and feeling old and tired.

The secret to inner beauty

To counter the harmful effects of free radicals, you need Vitamin E. It is an anti-oxidant that removes harmful free radicals from the cells, then protects it from further attack.

Vitamin E gives you healthy cells and inner beauty in more



than one way. It hinders cholesterol build-up by preventing oxidation. Likewise, it cleans up waste deposits in the blood. Then, Myra 300-E promotes the process of cellular renewal – repairing and revitalizing damaged cells. Aside from these, Vitamin E protects the skin against the harmful effects of sun exposure, chemicals and pollution. That gives you inner beauty that easily reflects on the outside.

Myra 300-E puts the [*e*] in inner b[*e*]auty

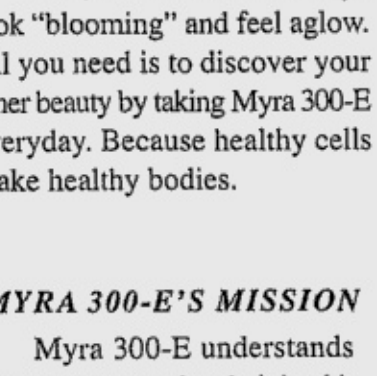
To make your cells healthy and give you inner beauty, you need to put some e into your life with Myra 300-E! – a pure, potent vitamin E that contains 300 I.U. (International Units) of Vitamin E in every capsule. By taking one capsule a day, free radicals are removed, cells are renewed, so you feel younger – longer!

Discover your inner beauty

Now, it's easier to always look "blooming" and feel aglow. All you need is to discover your inner beauty by taking Myra 300-E everyday. Because healthy cells make healthy bodies.

MYRA 300-E'S MISSION

Myra 300-E understands how women value their health and beauty. We also know that true beauty comes from having a healthy body. That's why Myra 300-E is committed to provide women with a vitamin brand that helps keep them healthy inside. We will take care of women's health, we will



ensure that her skin is kept nourished. Myra 300-E will make every woman not only healthy, but sexy and beautiful as well. Our vision is to make Myra 300-E known as every woman's vitamin for beauty.

"I've discovered the secret to inner beauty"

- eula

When you have healthy cells, you have inner beauty. And when you have inner beauty, you bloom. It shows in how your skin and your body feels. And you don't need to be in love to bloom, all you need is ***Myra 300-E*** *everyday. It helps eliminate harmful free radicals that speed up the aging process. Then it renews the cells to make you healthy, sexy and beautiful.*

Believe in inner beauty and watch yourself bloom. Take ***Myra 300-E*** *everyday.*

Harmful FREE Radicals (pollution, stress, poor diet) destroy the body cells and speed up aging.

MYRA 300-E works from the inside, repelling harmful FREE Radicals by promoting Cell Renewal and helping the body's production of new cells.

MYRA 300-E keeps body cells healthy and helps prevent premature aging.

VITAMIN E

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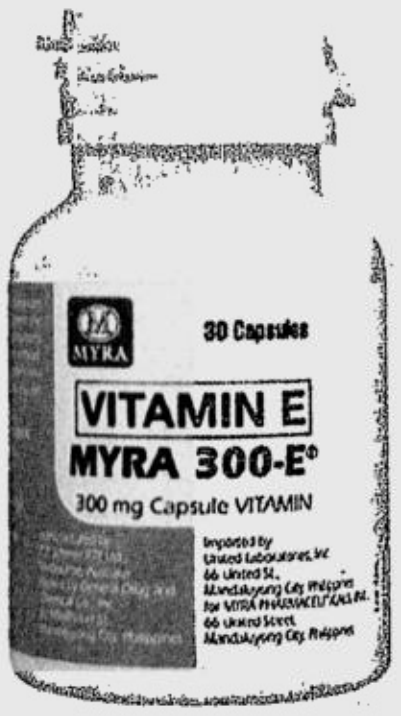
Healthy cells make healthy bodies



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Fil-Am filmmaker nominated for US award

THE INDEPENDENT Feature Project West has nominated writer-director David Maquiling for the 2002 IFP/West Independent Spirit "Someone to Watch" Award. On Saturday, March 23, the award will be presented in Santa Monica, California, exactly one year after Maquiling's first feature film, "Too Much Sleep," was released nationally, garnering critical acclaim.

The New York Times' Dave Kehr described "Too Much Sleep" as "a nightmare comedy on the order of Scorsese's 'After Hours' and David O. Russell's 'Spanking the Monkey,' and said that the film made Maquiling " a young filmmaker to watch."

"Too Much Sleep" tells the story of an offbeat underworld existing beneath a typical suburban town in the US. Maquiling's exploration of suburban in his movie mirrors the depth of the stories that his father, a doctor, told him when he was a child, about the beauty of his homeland.

Maquiling is a magna cum laude graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. He has finished writing his second feature, "Another Deep Breath," about a college professor who balances his new marriage with his growing attraction to a young student.

'Celebrating Being Filipino'

Ongoing until Monday, March 18 at the Peninsula Hotel in Makati is "Legacy 2002: Celebrating Being Filipino," an exhibit of Filipino arts and handicrafts that showcases the rich and colorful Philippines heritage and promotes opportunities to explore its trade potentials.

We were at the exhibit-sale's opening last March 12 and marveled at the products and art pieces on display, and at their very reasonable prices.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

The exhibit-sale is organized by the Makati City Cultural Office, The Peninsula Manila Hotel and Island Finds. Thank you, Tony and Lingling Cervantes, for helping provide yet another showcase for Filipino artistry and entrepreneurship.

Do try to visit the exhibit-sale at the Pen before it ends on March 18.

'Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman, The Heart Within'

Jane Seymour returns as Dr. Quinn in the movie made for television, "Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman: The Heart Within" on the Hallmark Channel premiering on March 24, at 9 p.m. Also starring are Robert Beltran and Kate Mulgrew.

Dr. Quinn and her family move to post-Civil War Boston where she and her children begin new lives. But the family soon realizes that the conservative society of Boston is a far cry from the frontier towns which Dr. Quinn formerly practiced medicine for many years.

Her daughter Colleen follows her mother's footsteps and graduates from Harvard Medical School, while son Brian decides to become a reporter.

Meanwhile, Dr. Quinn tries her hand at federal matters and takes herself to Washington D.C. for a meeting about industrial corruption with President Ulysses Grant.

"Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman: The Heart Within" will again be shown on March 25, also at 9 p.m.

Kissing the Virgin on NGC

National Geographic Channel's "Ecstasy" explores the nature of religious ecstasy in the different sects. On Wednesday, March 20 at 10 p.m., witness two women, one Israeli and one Arab, take part in the ritual burial of one of the most powerful religious icons in history.

Bearing witness to the influence of one woman on the lives of millions, The Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary in Jerusalem is a sacred ceremony, unique in the focus it gives to women in the male-oriented world of organized religion.

Learn from Ricky and Connie

Learn how to write scripts from Ricky Lee, and discoveryour acting talent with the help of Connie Chua by taking Green Door's summer workshops.

Ricky Lee, the award-winning scriptwriter, will handle classes in Basic Scriptwriting for Film and TV. There will be two classes: Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Sunday 1 p.m.-5 p.m.. Each class will be limited to 25 students, Workshop starts on April 20.

Connie Chua, accomplished stage, TV and film actress, will handle Basic Acting for Film and TV. Classes will be held weekdays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. starting April 15. Workshop students will mount a production as their culminating activity.

Call 433-4423.

Classical Encounters

Today, March 16, classical music enthusiasts will be treated to Italian, Broadway and Filipino classics by soprano Rachelle Gerodias and tenor Lemuel dela Cruz. Gerodias has won several awards including the top prize in the Civic Morning Musicals Vocal Competition in New York. Currently, she teaches voice at the University of Santo Tomas College of Music and at the University of the Philippines.

Dela Cruz, on the other hand, has been a soloist of the World Youth Orchestra, the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Academy Symphony Orchestra, UST Symphony Orchestra, UST Jazz Band and the Cebu Symphony Orchestra.

Operatic roles that Lemuel performed overseas include Count Almaviva in "Barber of Seville," Giovanni in "Una Cosa Rara," Rinuccion in "Gianni Schicci," and Angel in "Die Schauspiel Direktor."

Accompanying Gerodias and Dela Cruz is pianist Najib Ismail. They will serenade guests with pieces like "Libiamo," "Granada," "Estrelita," "Sa Kabukiran," "Quando men vo," "O Saave Fanciulla," "Music of the Night," "Think of Me," "Tonight," "Ang Pag-ibig Mo," and "Kalesa,"

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TWM presents Aquarela

The World of Music (TWM), the original and long-running series of live mall concerts marrying classics and pop, retro and jazz, gives Manila a taste of Brazilian and other Latin music today at 5 p.m. at the second level of The Podium.

TWM presents Aquarela, a leading exponent of Latin Caribbean music on the local scene. TWM is hosted by TV and radio personality Angelique Lazo.

Now on its fifth year, TWM has been treating local audiences to free concerts at prestigious malls. It has featured some of the best classical performers in Manila. More than a great concert, TWM offers audiences a unique educational experience. It provides listeners with information about the numbers being performed.

Aquarela has been known for performing the music of Brazilian and Cuban greats such as Tom Jobim, Sergio Mendes, Tito Puente, and Ruben Blades. Familiar songs like "Agua de Beber" or "Berimbau" take on new life with the inventive arrangements of this group of music buffs.

This special engagement of TWM is presented by Rado Switzerland and Montre.

DR. QUINN and her family move to post-Civil War Boston in the movie adaptation of the long-running hit TV drama.

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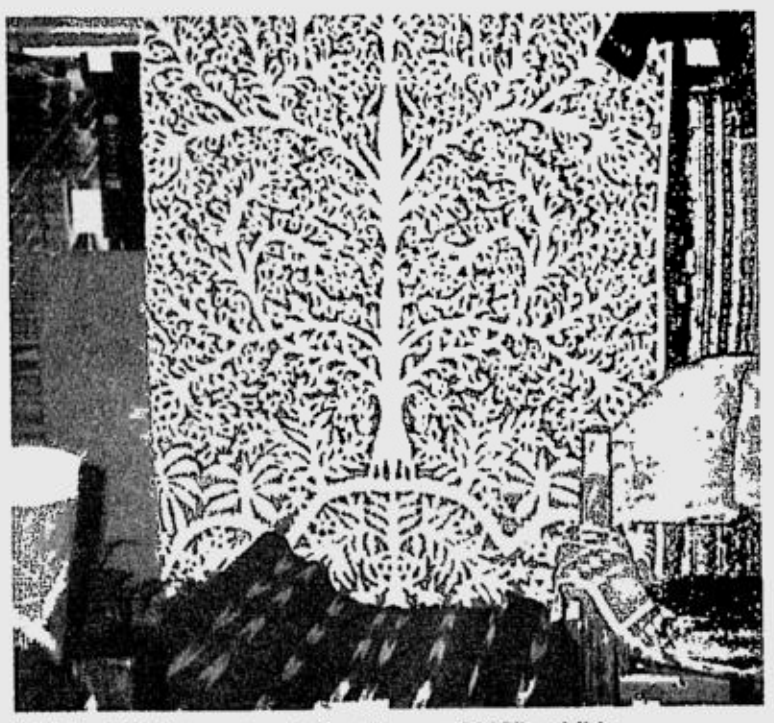
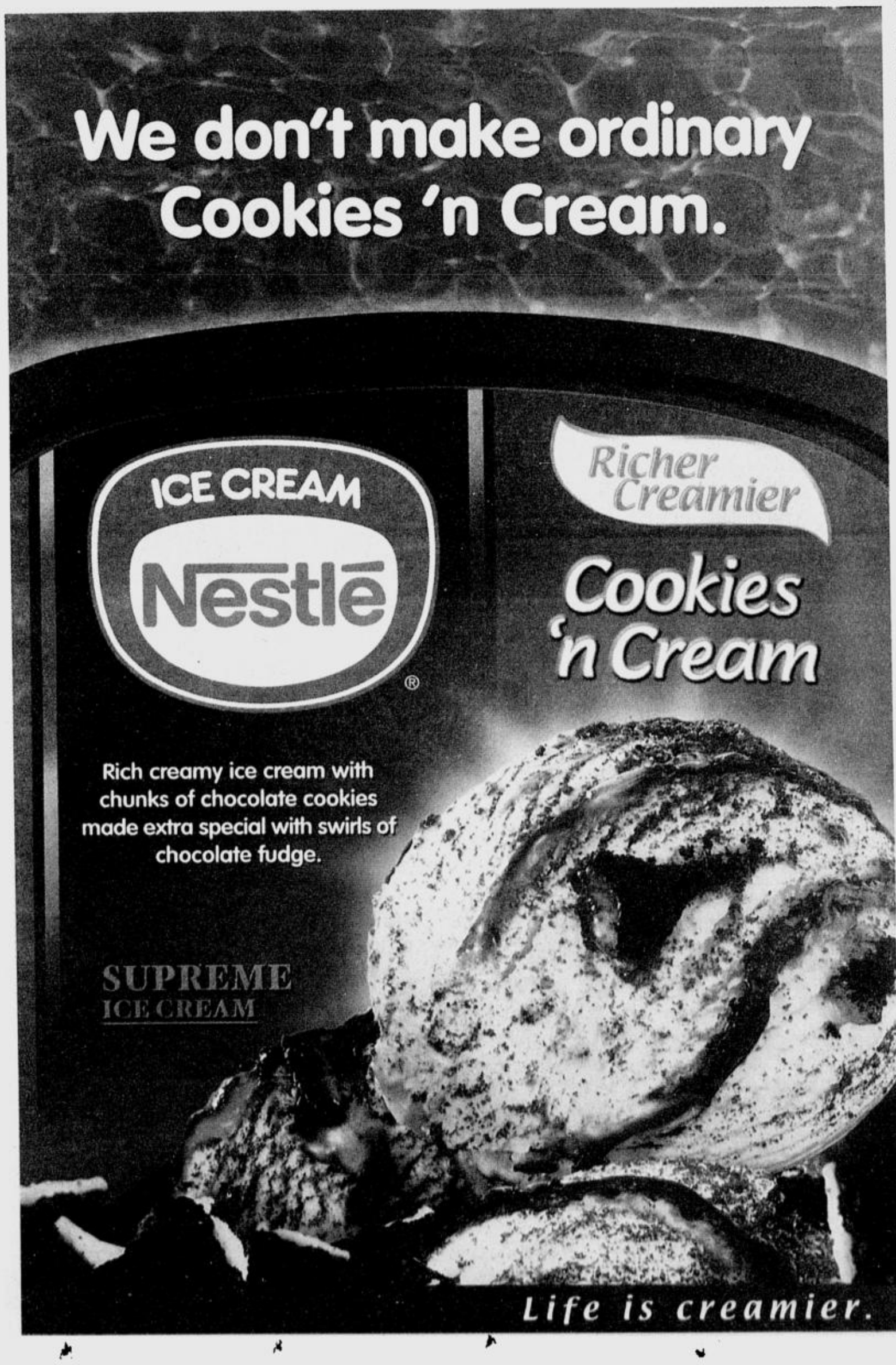


"TREE of life" tapestry at the "Legacy 2002" exhibit.



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Benedictions

From love of God springs all the other divine qualities and benedictions such wisdom, truthfulness, and compassion for others.

There are certain things we must do in order to achieve the highest gifts. My teacher once stated, "The search for perfect wisdom and the attempt to live by it is an ongoing eternal challenge—and it is real. Only the most courageous people will accept this challenge. The ignorant, the fearful and the lazy will remain as they are."

Indeed spiritual life is for the most courageous soul. Material nature is so strong that, without full surrender to the Supreme, it is impossible to reach the point of loving Him.

God is impossible to understand and to know with the power of our mind. He is like the ocean and we are a mere drop in that vast expanse of water. But a person who sees with the eye of faith can know God. It happens when one sees with love in his heart.

Truth

A person who has faith in the holy scriptures and in a holy person will believe, and the truth will be revealed to him by the Lord. The material mind becomes purified and the attempt to figure out the truth by the power of one's mind will diminish. Spiritual vision will increase. God will see to that.

If one's goal is to have pleasure in this world, there is no way he will have the desire to know the Absolute Truth. In reality, those who are attached to worldly pleasures are self-centered and blinded by the illusions of this world. It is difficult for them to surrender to God because they want to play God. They want to do their will and not the will of the Father. Consequently, they suffer the anxieties and miseries of their own foolishness and rebelliousness.

Those who are satisfied with their lack of knowledge and vision will certainly not search for the truth, nor will they progress in life. Their slogan: "Ignorance is bliss."

Weakness

And their common excuse for their weakness is "I am only human." They do not see our true nature.

If we want to solve life's problems, let us accept the challenge bravely and with great determination and faith in the Supreme. It is of no consequence if others accept or reject us. The only important thing is that we are doing what is important in life: to do God's will.

Q: How does The Inquirer protect small fry?

A: We keep an eye on the big fish.

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LIFESTYLE

Petite pop princess Minogue riding high in charts

By Paul Majendie

LONDON—Australia's pocket-size pop princess Kylie Minogue is riding high.

The 33-year-old star has now conquered the charts on both sides of the Atlantic and been garlanded with pop awards after her remarkable renaissance in the charts.

Tabloid tales

And the singer whose skimpy corset-style outfits have set male hearts racing around the world on Friday firmly put to rest tabloid tales—she did not have plastic surgery to improve her perfectly crafted posterior.

"I really don't do anything to my backside," she told obsessed show biz readers of Friday's Sun tabloid after landing yet another award at the World Music Awards in Monaco.

"I have been getting a lot of grief about my posterior," she said. "It appears to have become a national obsession but I think the fuss is ridiculous."

Cracking the American market is notoriously difficult—but Minogue has done the double with her single "Can't Get You Out Of My Head" reaching the US Top 10 while the album "Fever" has reached No. 3.

"Can't Get You Out of My Head" has sold more than one million copies in Britain alone and is still in the top 40 five months after its release.

The former soap star from "Neighbours" had a string of hits in the 1980s and early 1990s but her career then slumped. Now she is a hot ticket once more in the notoriously fickle music industry and last month landed two prestigious Brit Awards.

MINOGUE. Hot ticket once more.

Humbled

"I feel humbled and baffled by it," she told the magazine Hello. "I've been allowed to make mistakes and fall flat on my face and somehow people have retained an interest in me."

She also revealed to reporters at the Monaco awards that if the right project came along she would like to tackle movies now. She already has made a memorable cameo appearance in the award-winning musical "Moulin Rouge."

Minogue, who once had an affair with fellow Australian pop star Michael Hutchence, is now dating British male model James Gooding and told BBC chat show host Michael Parkinson: "I do want to get married and have children with James."

But on Friday she offered a glimmer of hope for her legion of hot-blooded male fans, telling The Sun: "I didn't mean it was going to happen immediately. I have no intention to get married at this stage in my life." ***Reuters***

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Quirky characters enliven 'The Shipping News'

THE FILM'S ensemble cast includes Judi Dench and Kevin Spacey.

"THE Shipping News" is a story about the triumphant transformation of a man seeking to rebuild his shattered life and mend his battered soul.

This is the story of Quoyle (Kevin Spacey), a hapless, lonely upstate New Yorker who—after losing his parents to double suicide and his runaway wife to a car accident—retreats to his ancestral home in Newfoundland with his daughter and his estranged Aunt Agnis (Judi Dench).

Reporter

In the small fishing village of Killick-Claw, Quoyle finds a job as a reporter at the local newspaper, The Gammy Bird. Here, among the wildly diverse group of characters with whom he interacts, Quoyle experiences his first sense of community, friendship and male camaraderie. And with each article he writes, his sense of this quirky community sharpens along with his sense of himself.

The Gammy Bird characters bring together a band of brigands, each with its own demons to conquer and skeletons to hide: There is a real sense of history that runs through every characters in this film.

Jack Buggit, played by Scott Glenn, is the owner of the newspaper and the man who grants Quoyle his first moral victory. Buggit is known as what they refer to in Newfoundland as "sensitive"—one who has a great wisdom about people.

Buggit is able to look into the "soul of matters, the soul of people" to figure out not only events that are going to happen, but also what people need to make their life better. Jack gives assignments that compel each of The Gammy Bird characters to face their own personal fears.

Confirmed bachelor

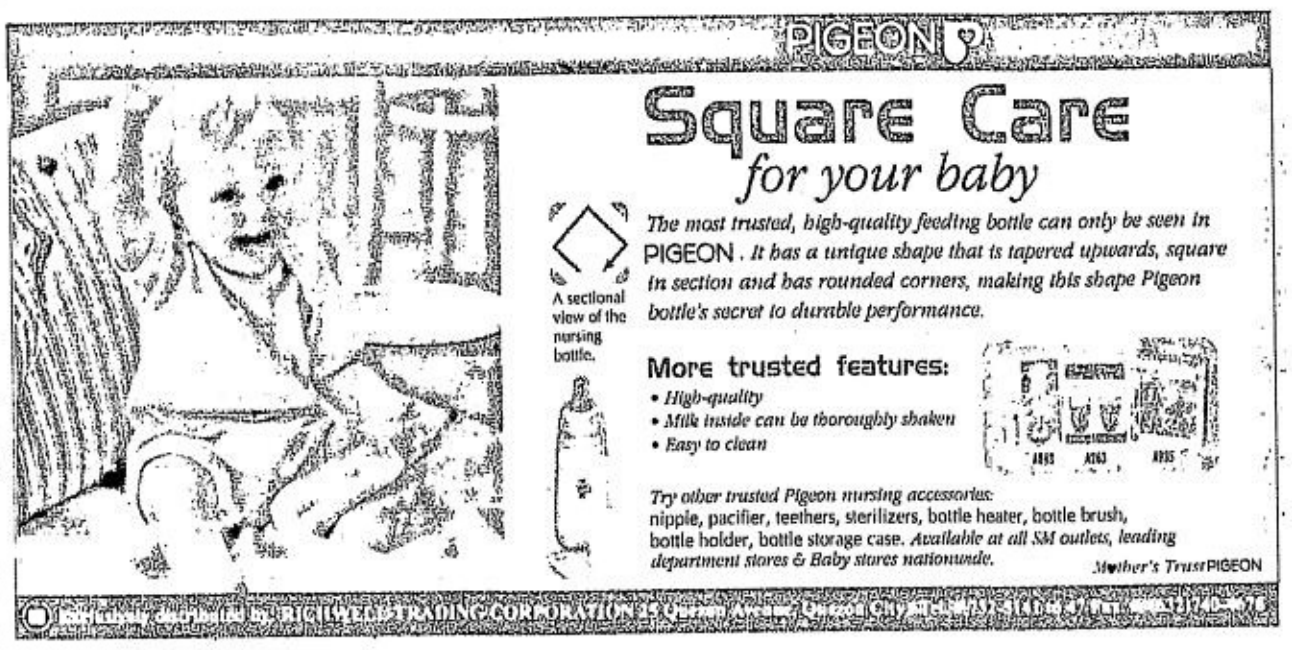
Billy Pretty, played by Gordon Pinsent, multi-awarded Canadian actor and native Newfoundlander, writes The Gammy Bird's home page. A confirmed bachelor who wants nothing to do with marriage, family and home, he also writes a gossip column under the alias, Junior Sugg.

Another intriguing character is Tert X. Card played by Pete Postlethwaite. Tert is a loner who is totally committed to this back-end newspaper. As the managing editor, and with Jack off fishing most of the time, Tert practically runs the paper.

B. Beaufield Nutbeem, played by Rhys Ifans, is The Gammy Bird's "international correspondent." He sits by the radio and turns international broadcasts into little peculiar tales to entertain people. It's the last thing, though, that Nutbeem wants to do because he learned of his parents' death through the BBC.

Chinese junk

Ifan's character is actually an Englishman who by chance and by accident sailed himself to Newfoundland. Earlier on, he builds a Chinese junk and sails it from Brazil, intending to arrive in Manhattan. His skills however are obviously not in sailing and boat building. The film is directed by Lasse Hallstrom.



Battling box office slump, MGM unveils movie slate

By Bob Tourtellotte

PIERCE BROSNAN. 20th James Bond film.

LAS VEGAS—Looking to battle its way out of a box office slump, film studio Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc. unveiled its upcoming movies on Tuesday, led by summer drama "Windtalkers," a World War Two epic with Nicolas Cage.

Marketing misfires

MGM's financial statement was wounded this current quarter by a couple of flops—action adventure "Rollerball" and World War Two drama "Hart's War"—that company President Chris McGurk chalked up to "marketing misfires."

"We can't repeat those kinds of errors going forward over the rest of the slate," he told Reuters after an MGM-sponsored lunch at the ShoWest theater industry gathering in Las Vegas where the studios screen new films for theater owners.

A strong box office is a must for MGM's fortunes. Just last week, it lowered its financial guidance for the first quarter due to the two box office flops. More than any other of Hollywood's major studios, its finances can be swayed by the success or failure of one or two major movies.

Moreover, MGM is in the middle of trying to find a merger or joint venture partner to increase its distribution outlets, and a poor profit statement hurts its market valuation.

The studio said last week it expects to post a full-year loss in 2002 of 46 to 48 cents per share.

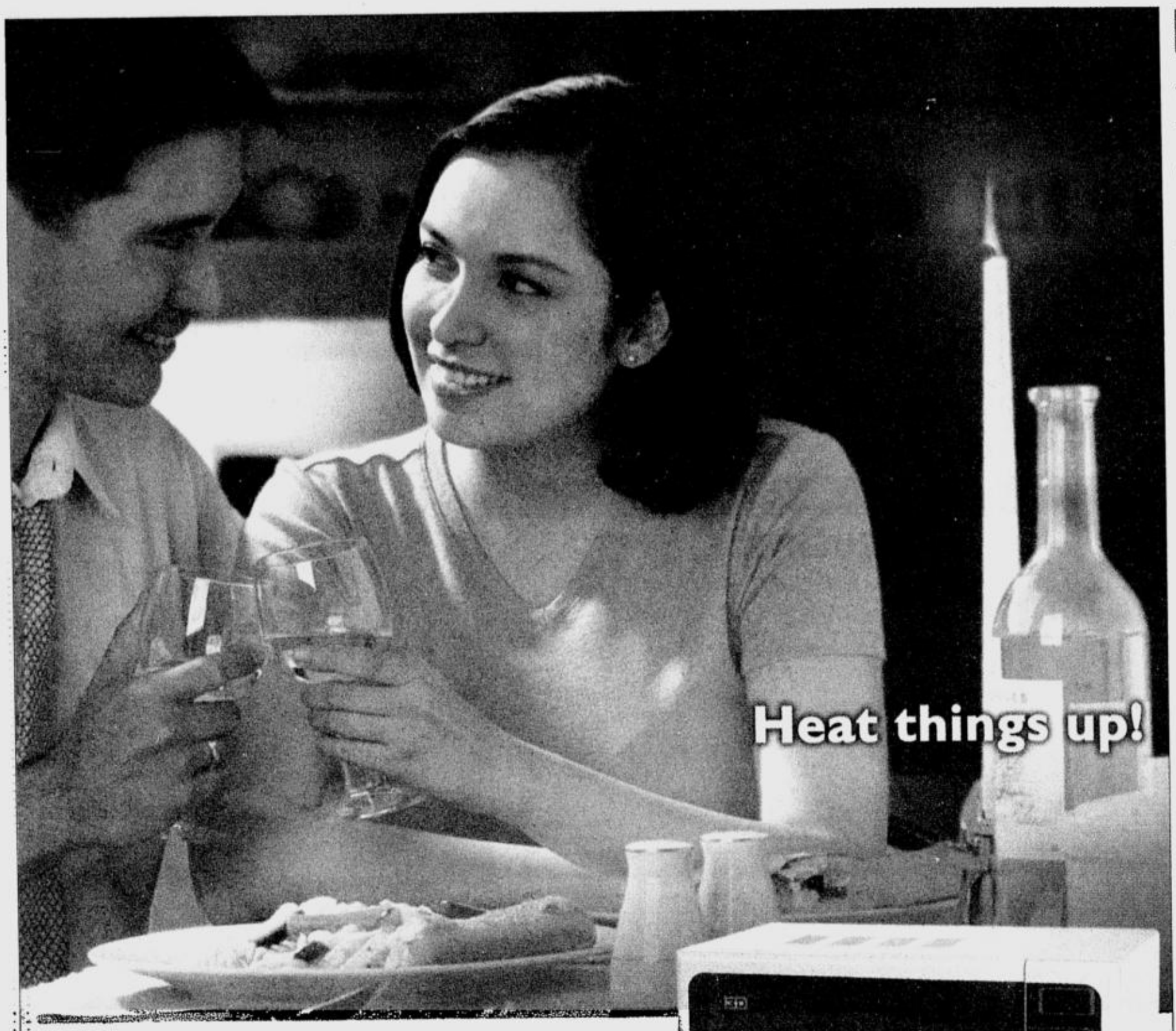
Theater owners

For theater owners, MGM screened "Windtalkers," about a US Marine Sergeant (Cage) who is assigned to protect a Native American soldier whose use of the Navajo language provided a "code" for the US troops that the Japanese could not break.

MGM also showed clips from family film "The Crocodile Hunter: Collision Course," starring Australian adventurer Steve Irwin.

McGurk said "Crocodile Hunter" is the kind of film that could be a sleeper hit like last

BATTLING/ p.D3



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Britney Spears denies break-up reports

LOS ANGELES—To paraphrase her latest single, pop princess Britney Spears is "not a girl, not yet a woman" and not yet broken up with her boyfriend, 'N Sync singer Justin Timberlake.

After a rash of media speculation in recent days that the reigning couple of teen pop had split up, Spears issued a denial on Monday from Germany.

"No, that's not true. Me and Justin did not split up," Spears, 20, told MTV Europe.

Busy schedules

According to various newspaper reports, Spears was seen drowning her sorrows at Los Angeles hot spots early last week, with unidentified sources claiming the relationship fell victim to their busy schedules. Her publicist, Lisa Kasteler, did not return a message seeking comment.

Spears, who told Rolling Stone magazine last December that her new year's resolution was to spend more time with Timberlake, has been busy promoting her new movie "Crossroads," and begins a two-month North American tour in May. Timberlake, 21, kicked off an 'N Sync tour last week.

Spears, and curly-haired Timberlake, have known each other since the early 1990s, when they were both in the cast of "The Mickey Mouse Club."

Friendship

They rekindled their friendship a few years later, and became an "item" in September 2000 after they turned up together at the MTV Video Music Awards in New York.

The first couple of teen pop has sold millions of records and played to arenas packed with screaming pre-teen fans. But with the mania subsiding, Spears has started diversifying.

She made her feature acting debut last month in "Crossroads," a road movie in which she plays a high school valedictorian who loses her virginity to a mysterious bad boy. The kissing scenes reportedly disturbed Timberlake, although he made light of them while helping Spears promote the film. (Spears, in turn, was reportedly upset when Timberlake kissed a girl for an 'N Sync video.)

The film, budgeted at just $12 million, has grossed $34 million to date at the North American box office. ***Reuters***

SPEARS. Film debut in "Crossroads."

Battling

From page D2

year's MGM comedy "Legally Blonde," with Reese Witherspoon. MGM has only about $12 million invested in "Crocodile Hunter" and needs about $15 million in domestic ticket sales to break even, McGurk said.

This past year at movie theaters, family films proved to be the biggest blockbusters. Of the 20 films that grossed over $100 million, 17 belonged to "G", "PG," or "PG-13" categories.

From its specialty film label United Artists, MGM also has "Deuces Wild," about young toughs in 1950s gang wars in New York, starring Matt Dillon. And farther down the road, it has comedies "A Guy Thing" with Jason Lee and Julia Stiles and "Barbershop" with former rap star Ice Cube.

Biggest title

MGM's biggest title of 2002 will be the November release of the 20th picture in the long-running series of superspy movies based on fictional British agent 007, James Bond.

"With 'Windtalkers' and 'Bond,' we've got two big event movies that we feel really good about, and then we've got a slate in between that's full of the type of movies that we think have a good risk-reward profile," he said.

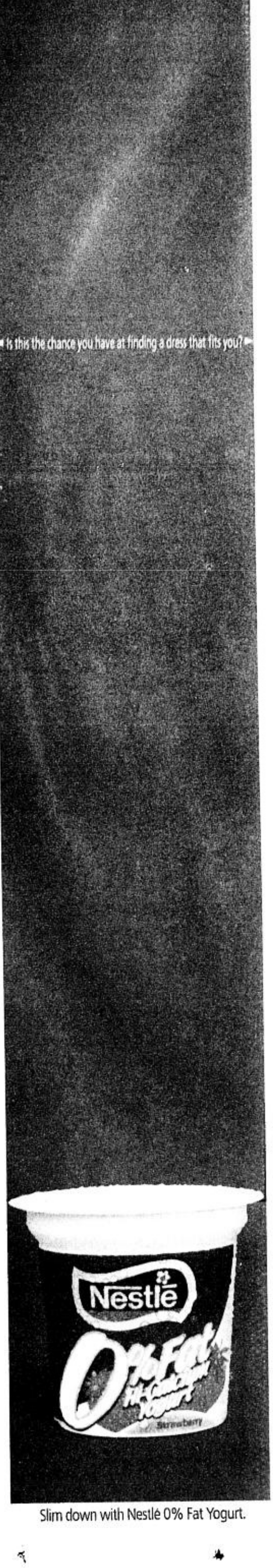
For MGM, that idea basically translates into inexpensive, co-financed production where MGM puts up part of the money, but claims a healthy distribution fee and retains certain rights for video, DVD, TV and other revenue streams.

Indeed, McGurk said one positive point about "Rollerball" was that of the film's $60 million cost, MGM paid only about $23 million of it.

Disappointment

The greater disappointment was the lackluster performance of "Hart's War," starring Bruce Willis, which enjoyed generally strong reviews but was clobbered by competition from Denzel Washington's "John Q" and recently named Oscar nominees.

Still, it's not only those movies that have hurt MGM. It opened crime caper "Bandits" last fall when the anthrax scare was keeping Americans at home. "Windtalkers" was initially set for a November release, but was pushed back to the summer. ***Reuters***



Slim down with Nestlé 0% Fat Yogurt.

Senate Bill 2049 gains bipartisan support from a number of senators at initial hearing

By Lynn S. Pareja

"THE POWER to tax is the power to destroy," quoted Senator Vicente Sotto III from an unnamed source in his sponsorship speech for Senate Bill 2049. "But do we have a reason to destroy the movie industry?"

Weight

For more than half a century now, the local movie industry has groaned under the weight of onerous taxes imposed on it by the government which collects 30 percent of gross income receipts from the box office.

Senator Sotto believes that this country never intended to destroy the movie industry. "But whatever our intentions are," he says, "the present situation shows that we are allowing it to die, and reality shows that this industry is, indeed, dying."

Citing figures presented by powerpoint by the Film Development Foundation of the Philippines and other organizations to the committees on public information and mass media, local government, ways and means and finance, he expressed alarm over dwindling audiences for Filipino films. Since 1997, the local film industry experienced a drop in ticket sales from P30 million to P15 million in Metro Manila.

18-percent drop

Nationwide, there was an 18- percent drop from P1.2 billion in 1999 to P981 million in 2001. In 1997, there were a total of 202 films made by 52 producers. Three years later, the number of films produced shrunk by more than 50 percent.

Because of exorbitant taxation, film producers resort to heavy cost-cutting measures just to break even. It has become extremely difficult to make quality films, which are sometimes more costly to produce.

The bill seeks to address this problem by reallocating the amusement tax to 30 deserving quality films each year by way of reward to encourage producers to make good films, movies that enhance the quality of life by truthfully examining the human condition.

Co-sponsors of the bill with Senator Sotto are Senators Juan Flavier, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, Loren Legarda-Leviste, Manny Villar, Jr., Ralph Recto, Loi Ejercito and John Osmeña.

Support

During interpellations at the senate session hall last Wednesday, five more senators joined the eight authors of the bill in expressing their support to save the film industry from extinction. Senator Rene Cayetano considers it "very timely" to pass the bill now and feels that donations to the proposed Film Development Council should be tax-exempt.

Senator Gregorio Honasan reminded everyone that the film industry is a major influence on our society. Senator Ramon Revilla reiterated his debt of gratitude to the film industry where he came from. Senator Noli de Castro expressed his "100 percent support for the bill" and the message of support from Senator Edgardo Angara was "to ensure that the purpose is implemented, for Filipino films to show the very best and to compete globally."

FILM Development Foundation of the Philippines officers Marilou Diaz-Abaya and Laurice Guillen with Senators Francis Pangilinan and Manuel Villar.

THE MOVIE bill's chief proponent, Sen. Vicente Sotto III, delivers his sponsorship speech.

Shared concern

It was heartening to note that the senators' support for the bill was guided not by partisan considerations but by their shared concern for the future of Philippine Cinema.

Interpellations mainly for clarification of salient portions of the bill will resume after the Lenten break, and it is hoped that, with the endorsement of the senators, the bill would pass the Senate before the long recess in June this year.

DIAZ-ABAYA and Eddie Romero with Sen. Ralph Recto.

Theater stars' claims to fame

By Behn Cervantes

(Conclusion)

LEONARDIA. Bette Midler once shined his shoes with olive oil.

AMIEL Leonardia is a laid-back theater personality who now heads the UP Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Department in Diliman. He is a Silliman University alumnus—that may explain why he is less theatrical than most of those who surround him in the State University's theater circle.

However, the reticent Amiel has his own claims to fame and will declare them with sufficient pride after others have finished detailing their achievements, if even only by affinity:

Operetta

Why, somewhere in a small Upstate New York summer stock theater company sometime in the mid-'60s, he dressed up the sets for a wannabe singer in Carlo Minotti's operetta "Susannah's Secret."

Years later, she ended up becoming one of director Mel Brooks' favorite actresses for his goofy comedies. Her name? She was the late but most wonderful Madeline Kahn, no less.

He also stage-managed the late Swedish actress Viveca Lindfors in "Hedda Gabler" when it was produced at the Kennedy Theater in Honolulu in 1963.

Still not satisfied with having lifted his bench high enough to impress us, he quickly recalls one evening in 1964:

After hectic rehearsals for Lorca's "Blood Wedding" that he directed as his production thesis in the University of Hawaii, a young actress who portrayed the Beggar Woman in his play belted out "I'm The Greatest Star" into the night.

Fervent wish

This buxom island Jewish teenager addressed her fervent wish to the bright stars over Oahu, hoping that the heavens above would abet her quest for fame and fortune.

Not only did Amiel direct her in her formative years, but one evening this same would-be actress, would-be singer and would-be star even shined his shoes with olive oil.

The would-be singer? The would-be actress? The would-be star? Why, no one else but the Divine Ms Bette Midler.

(She was Bette Middler then but eliminated the unnecessary "d" like Barbra did the extraneous "a" when she indeed became one big, lovable star.)

Will anyone believe that quiet Amiel directed Bette? Did she actually shine his shoes? Did she sing her hopes and dreams to him? Yes, these are Amiel's claims to fame!

I can vouch that Amiel's claims are indeed legit because Bette was *my* friend, too.

Teacher

Finally, Leticia H. Tison was my teacher in radio and she was instrumental in my graduation. Years later, she became my colleague when I started teaching in the UP Speech and Drama Department.

She has been my friend for many memorable years. To everyone else in the UP Speech and Drama Department as well as the thousands of students she touched during her fruitful years as a professor, she is Manang Letty.

What are her claims to fame? Without a pause, she states, "Why, my students, of

THEATER/p.D5

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SWITCHING CHANNELS

The Hunks mark first year tomorrow

JIMMY Neutron and his robotic dog Goddard.

By Edmund L. Sicam

THE HUNKS, made up of Diether Ocampo, Piolo Pascual, Jericho Rosales, Carlos Agassi and Bernard Palanca, celebrate their first year as a group with a whole-day celebration tomorrow.

At PinoyCentral, the much-awaited Hunks logos will be available to cellphone owners. Fans can choose from a variety of logos by texting LOGO<space>HUNKS to 236 for Smart and Talk and Text Subscribers. PinoyCentral is also coming out with the group's first official webpage—hunks.pinoycentral.com.

Then at 12 noon, the group will party on "ASAP" at Splash Island highlighted by the launch of their new single from their live recording album, "Natagpuan Ka Na." Like their first single, "Darating Ka Pala," the new single is from the award-winning team of Moy Ortiz, Edith and Margot Gallardo.

Next stop is SM Megamall for The Hunks Fair. Items like CDs, shirts, pillows, eyewear, scents and a calendar from ABS-CBN Consumer Products will be available to the public. ABS-CBN will also come out with a giant poster in the March edition of Star Studio magazine. At 4 p.m., the boys will party with their fans by posing for pictures with them and signing autographs.

Multi-media launch for 'Jimmy Neutron'

NICKELODEON, the 24-hour cable channel for children, that successfully translated one of its animated series, "The Rugrats," to the big screen, is trying a different tack with its latest franchise, Jimmy Neutron. Instead of starting out on TV and crossing over to the movies after the series becomes a hit, Nickelodeon is launching the character in different media almost simultaneously.

The biggest splash will be made in the movies with "Jimmy Netron: Boy Genius." In the US, it premiered on Dec. 21, 2001. Locally, the film is scheduled to be released during the Easter weekend. Already, there's a lot of buzz about the movie because it has been nominated for an Oscar for Best Film Animation along with "Monsters Inc." and "Shrek."

We watched the movie's preview last Sunday at Robinsons Movieworld and we understand why it has been nominated for an Oscar. It has an interesting concept: a boy genius who seems to have a knack for inventing all kinds of gadgets, while remaining a child at heart. Jimmy and his robotic dog Goddard go up against aliens from outer space who abduct all the parents in his neighborhood.

At first, the kids rejoice because for once, they can do whatever they want without mom and dad spoiling their fun. Eventually, however, they start to miss their parents and, with Jimmy as their leader, they rescue them from the evil aliens.

Before the movie, the kids in the moviehouse were treated to games where toy figures and other goodies were given away to the winners. The children enjoyed the usual fight sequences and rough stuff but some younger viewers got a little frightened when Jimmy and his gang were being threatened by the bad guys. We foresee, therefore, that unlike "Rugrats" which appealed to both boys and girls of all ages, "Jimmy Neutron" will be geared more towards boys ages 7 to 13.

REGINE (right) with a contestant on "Star for a Night."

The music is also meant to attract this age bracket. There are three new songs from Aaron Carter and a new track from Britney Spears, as well as remakes from Nsync, The Backstreet Boys, The Ramones and many more.

After the movie, we had a chance to talk to Leslie Lee, marketing and communications manager of Nickelodeon Asia. He was excited about his station's plans for the region: "Jimmy Neutron: The TV Series" will start airing this October. Before the series starts, however, there will be a special to mark the transition between the movie and the TV show.

The character also appears bimonthly in Nick magazine and various companies are jumping in to develop various merchandising materials.

'Star for a Night' airs March 31

"Star for a Night," the innovative talent show hosted by Regine Velasquez, starts airing on March 31, Easter Sunday, on IBC-13 at 8 p.m. Some 300 individuals auditioned for the contest but only a selected few have made it to the show. Each week, only four contestants will be featured. The difference with other talent shows is that each one will get a complete makeover, a wardrobe for the evening, a musical arrangement prepared by musical director Raul Mitra and back-up dancers, so that he or she will know how it feels to be a professional performer.

For the weekly competition, the prize is P50,000. There will also be a monthly contest where the top prize is P100,000. The monthly winners will compete in the grand finals, where a cool one million pesos will be at stake.

Although the slots for the first season are virtually filled up, there will be more auditions today at the Viva office on E. Rodriguez ave. starting at 9 a.m. Interested parties should bring one photo, biodata and minus-ones for three songs. The minimum age requirement is 12 years old. There is no ceiling on the contestant's age.

"Star for a Night" is the latest creation of Mentorn International, the worldwide production and distribution arm of Mentorn Barraclough, the same company that owns "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" and "The Weakest Link."

Star-studded sports event

When a consumer company wants to promote its products via special projects, expect them to use a lot of TV personalities. For instance on March 9, Nestea sponsored the 6th Beach Volley University Championships at the La Salle Greenhills beach volleyball court.

Present to add glamour to the event were "Attagirl" mainstays Onemig Bondoc, Andrea del Rosario and Reggie Curley, plus Alessandra de Rossi and. Talent Center regulars Anna Larrucea of "Tabing-Ilog" and Cherrie Lou of "MTB."

Other guests were hunks Monsour del Rosario and Toffee Calma, Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Zorayda Ruth Andam and Miss World Tourism 2001 Michelle Reyes. Over half a million pesos in prizes are at stake in the tournament, which will feature teams from Manila-based colleges and universities.

00%
HEESE.
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ure up.

Theater stars'...

From page D4

course! You were one. There was Lino (Brocka), Boots (Anson Roa), Winkie (Collas), Manette (Dayrit), Felichi (Singian), Joonee (Gamboa) Eric de Guia (*aka* Kidlat Tahimik) and . . ." No, I interrupt Letty, I mean *real* claims to fame . . . as a joke. Well, Letty states, after thinking for a while, that Fernando Poe Jr., the King no less, hugged her in a San Miguel commercial. Shoppers in the grocery would point her out during the showing of that popular commercial.

She was also Lea Salonga's endearing Yaya Ising in a PLDT commercial that made passersby give her another look.

Plays

Any more claims to fame, Letty? Faithfully, she insists she would like to enumerate the plays that I directed which she appeared in: UP Repertory's staging of Nick Joaquin's "Larawan" starring Barbara Perez and Susan Valdez; Amelia Lapeña Bonifacio's "Pagbibinyag Sa Apoy At Dugo" starring Barbara Perez again; in "Agnes of God" with Pilar Pilapil.

She also appeared in the Repertory Philippines production of Lorca's Doña Rosita, "La Soltera" with Celia Diaz Laurel and Zeneida Amador. What took place was a reversal of roles: now, the teacher was being directed by her former student, and relishing the switch.

What about my own claims to fame? Well, let it suffice for me to say that Fides, Lollie, Amiel and Letty are my friends.—Beat that!

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

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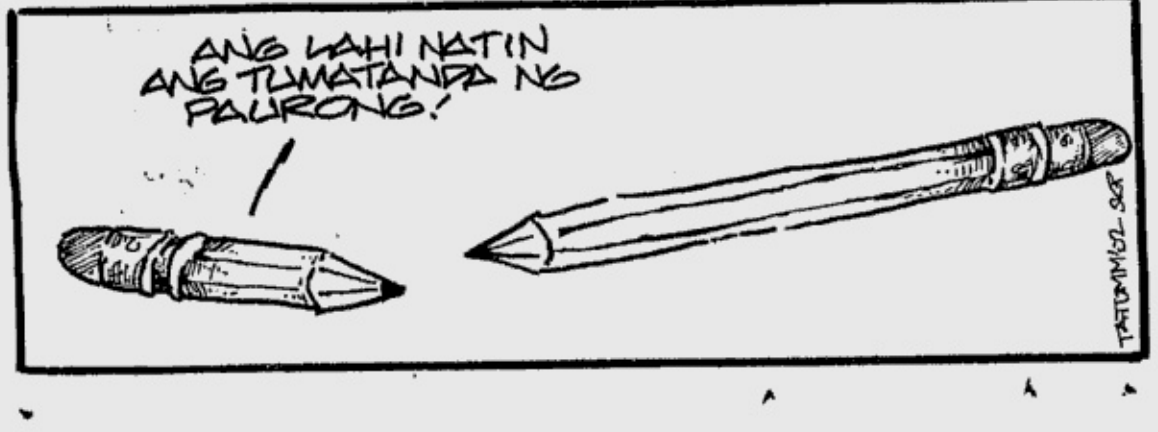


HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Jerry Lewis, Kate Neilligan, William Armstrong, Pat Nixon
Happy Birthday: You should take a serious look at your insurance policies, investments, wills or any other personal papers that may require updating or changes. You will have a greater concern with environmental issues, waste products and legal matters. Your passion will run deep. Your numbers are 9, 15, 21, 27, 32, 38

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You will have a problem dealing with your emotions today. Try not to take comments made by others to heart. Take time to reflect.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Work on your own projects and refrain from dealing with groups or agencies that could lead you in the wrong direction. Take short trips if it will lead to information that you require.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): For now, your focus should be on helping others. Your serious attitude will help you convince others that you are on the right track.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will tend to overreact toward others today. Keep your feelings to yourself for the time being and focus on yourself, your hobbies and the things that interest you the most.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You won't want to stay put today. Travel will entice you and opportunities to deal with groups of different backgrounds will be extremely informative.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can turn your financial picture around if you invest wisely. Stop believing in everyone else and show confidence in yourself and your abilities. You can do well if willing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll be attracting all sorts of attention today if you get out and mingle. Partnerships will be anything but dull. You will find it necessary to compromise a little if you want things to run smoothly.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may want to work on a project that you enjoy today. Much can be accomplished if you put your mind to it. You will get the help you need if you ask. A good investment is evident so don't miss out.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You'll be in a party mood. Call up friends or plan something special. Don't hesitate to volunteer to help out at a community event. You will meet new people and form new friendships.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Stick up for yourself but don't stick around if someone is abusive and being uncompromising. You should make plans to do something that you can enjoy.

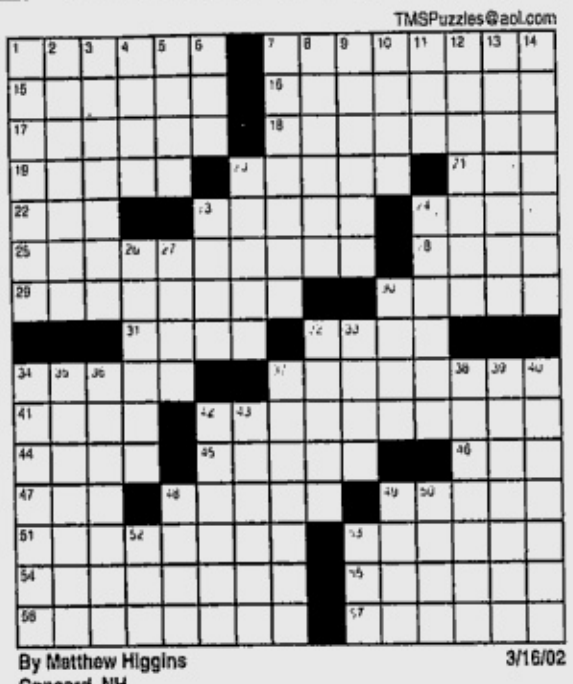
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Get together with siblings or close friends. The more you talk about your most recent project the more prepared you will be to make it happen.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Put your time and effort into fixing up your home or investing in something that will improve your living space. You stand a good chance of meeting someone special if you do something that will bring you in contact with unusual groups.

Birthday Baby: You love to play make-believe. You find it impossible to stick to any kind of a schedule. You require encouragement and you are highly intuitive. You are truly a creative individual with a vivid imagination.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

3/16/02

ACROSS
1 1978 John Travolta musical
7 Married women in Rouen
15 Made a forward thrust
16 Hooked, as a nose
17 Purpose
18 Moved with a heavy tread
19 Damp
20 Mutilates
21 Docs' org.
22 Thermoplastic resin: abbr.
23 Chill con __
24 Contract in wrinkles
25 Lightweight crinkled fabric
28 __ fixe (obsession)
29 In an aimless manner
30 Accumulate
31 Flower holder
32 Mediocre
34 Standee's handgrip
37 Cutter with folding blades
41 Branchlet
42 Golf groups
44 Lasso
45 Marsh grasses
46 Campaign contributor: abbr.
47 Simpson trial judge
48 Washington' myth-maker, Parson __
49 Actress Scacchi
51 Potential
53 Damaged by heavy use
54 Deserving
55 Harm
56 Goes in again
57 Ribbed

DOWN
1 Brief look
2 Exceed the time limit
3 Tempter
4 Matures
5 Transmitted
6 NYC summer hrs.
7 Bunkum
8 Horselike
9 Vacation from school
10 Claim to a share
11 Maugham story, "Cakes and __"
12 Satellite of Uranus
13 Adversaries
14 Puts to sleep
20 Twinned crystal
23 Film edits
24 Japanese robe
26 Wreak havoc
27 Fastener
30 Requests
32 Kernels
33 Small bills
34 Type of bass
35 Car color combo
36 Counterstroke
37 Docs-to-be
38 Moving force
39 Main movie
40 Got away
42 High-pitched
43 Cobbler, at times
48 Ice skater Katarina
49 Tierney of "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir"
50 Hindu prince
52 Moral transgression
53 Computer, memory quantum

Friday's Puzzle Solved

B	A	S	R	A		O	N	U	S		S	C	A	B
A	C	H	E	D		P	O	N	E		A	O	N	E
I	N	A	N	E		E	R	L	E		D	U	E	T
L	E	G	A	L	B	R	I	E	F	S		R	A	T
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A	R	S		S	T	A	I	D	E	R		D	I	E
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3/16/02

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'Saya ng Summer sa ABS-CBN' to be launched on 'ASAP'

RICHARD Gomez, Maricel Soriano and Dolphy get ready for the shoot.

IN a fitting welcome to the hot and sizzling summer season and to launch the "Saya ng Summer sa ABS-CBN" network campaign, "ASAP" will go wet and wild when it broadcasts via remote telecast from Splash Island this Sunday, March 17.

THE HUNKS prepare to get wet and wild at Splash Island.

MTV

The all-star summer MTV of ABS-CBN will also be first aired in "ASAP." For the first time, the whole ABS-CBN family was brought together for a project of this magnitude as all tapings, shootings, and guestings were rescheduled to make way for shooting the MTV.

Directed by ace director Johnny Manahan in collaboration with segment directors Christopher Lee, Erin Balise Pascual, Odyssey Flores, Alco Guerrero and Tots Tolentino, the station ID was shot in various locations including Philippine Plaza Hotel, the Eugenio Lopez Jr. Communications Center, the ABS-CBN Broadcast Center and Parks & Wildlife.

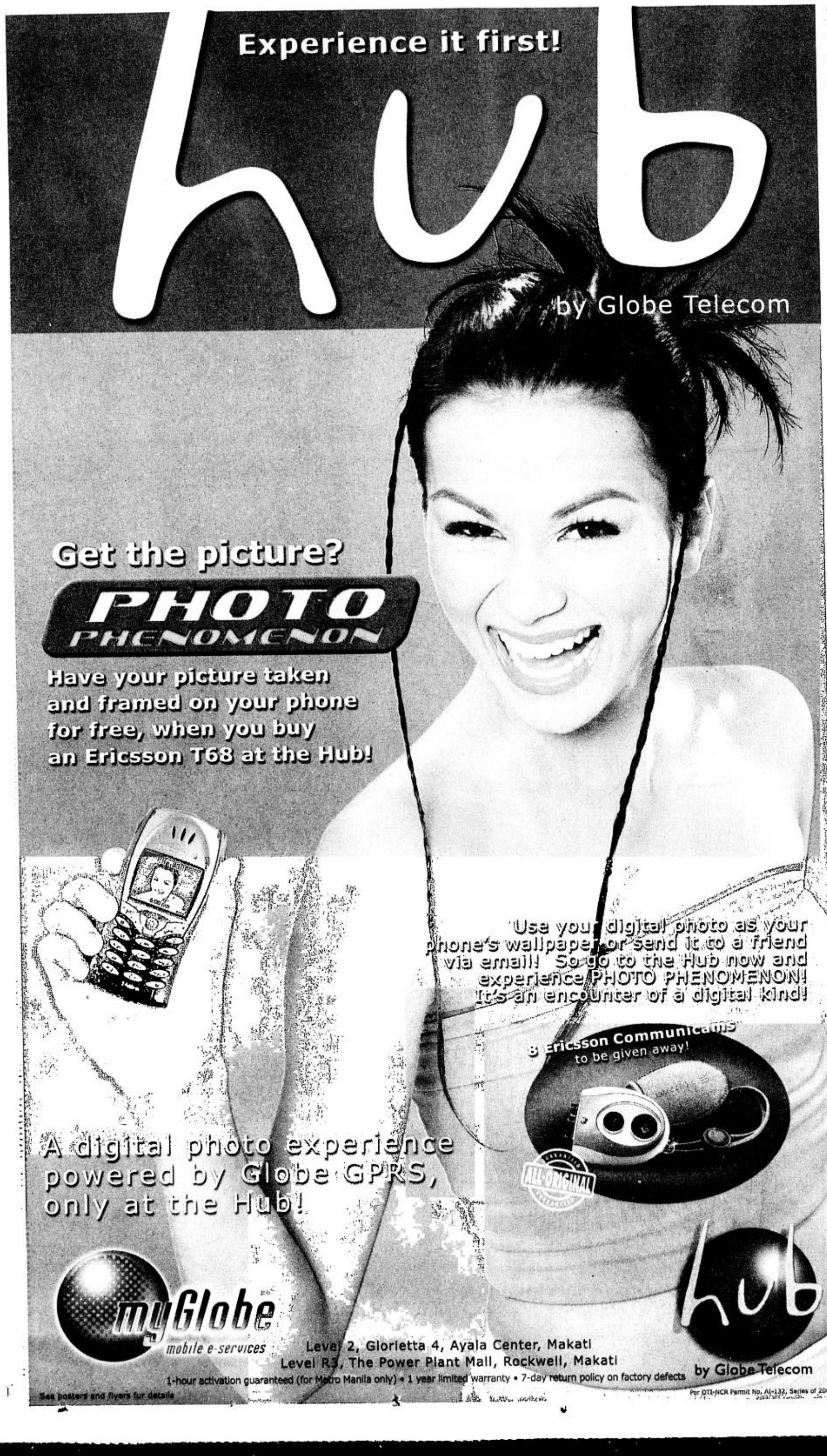
The MTV features the stars of all programs of the network including top talents Dolphy, Sharon Cuneta, Aga Muhlach, Judy Ann Santos, Claudine Barretto, Pops Fernandez, Kris Aquino, Jolina Magdangal, The Hunks, Whattamen, Attagirls, the casts of all its soap operas, plus all members of the ABS-CBN Talent Center.

Breather

Members of the ABS-CBN News & Current Affairs team plus radio personalities from dzMM and dwRR also get a chance to take a breather from serious news and let their hair down in this colorful MTV.

Dramatic actors, contravidas, and other serious artists will likewise take a break from their heartbreaking roles as they engage in relaxing summer activities. Of course, it was also the chance for sexy bodies to don their summer wear and show off their tans.

The whole MTV is accompanied by Roselle Nava's "Free," taken from the "Jam Himig Handog" album. ABS-CBN is still the best choice to keep you company during these hot summer months!



ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

Lees' 'The Worlds of Lerner and Loewe' is fascinating

By Noelani Torre

(Conclusion)

LERNER and Loewe's natures greatly differed, as is best illustrated by their attitudes towards marriage. One divorce was enough to make the Viennese Loewe abandon his dreams of happy-ever-afters, but born-with-a-silver-spoon Lerner, on the other hand, remained an incurable romantic till the end.

Very talented

The most important thing, however, is that they had one characteristic in common—they were both very talented. Author Lees never fails to remind us of this, but neither does he prevent us from seeing their less-desirable qualities.

He gives fulsome praise when he deems it right, but he can also be harshly critical. While discussing an obscure musical by the pair—"Love Story," for example—he baldly writes that he found the script and the score to be "very peculiar." He also discusses the anachronisms he perceives in Lerner's "Camelot" script.

Theater royalty

The greatest praise is almost always reserved for "My Fair Lady," the musical that elevated Lerner and Loewe to theater royalty, and Julie Andrews to stardom. As for Rex Harrison, who played Higgins, Lees quotes Roy Moseley, saying, "It was the crowning achievement of his entire career—a definitive characterization which firmly placed him among the ranks of the legendary Broadway stars."

One good thing about Lees' praise, though, is that he doesn't do all the talking, he lets others do it instead. Thus this book is as objective an account as it can possibly be.

The reviews of "My Fair Lady," says Lees, "were uniformly ecstatic. Praising Lerner's lyrics and Loewe's 'entrancing love music,' Brooks Atkinson in the New York Times called it a wonderful show. Walter Kerr in the Herald-Tribune proclaimed it a miraculous musical and said, 'Miss Andrews descended a staircase looking like all the glamour of the theater summed up in an instant.'"

Classic

"My Fair Lady" went on to become a classic, its original New York run ending on September 1962, six and a half years after its opening. Quoting Abe Lauffe in his book "Broadway's Greatest Musicals," Lees tells us that the show "broke records not only for number of consecutive performances and gross receipts in New York, but also, possibly, for number of performances given all over the world. Within a few years, the show became internationally known, with companies in Australia, Sweden, and Mexico.

Four years after the show had opened on Broadway, it was running simultaneously in London, Oslo, Stockholm, Melbourne, Copenhagen, and Helsinki. It was also presented in Amsterdam, Moscow, and Israel."

It has even reached Philippine shores and that of other Asian countries as well, though we are more familiar with its film version starring Audrey Hepburn (an adaptation, by the way, that not many seem to have liked—especially Julie Andrews, who was replaced by Hepburn).

Screenplay

After "My Fair Lady" came "Gigi," a film that would rake in nine Oscars in the Academy Awards of 1959. Lerner got his second Oscar for Best Screenplay based on material from another medium (his first was for the screenplay of "An American in Paris") and Loewe got his first for Best Song not long after that.

Loewe, who had just suffered a massive coronary, would quit completely from musical theater and Lerner would go through his fourth and nastiest divorce. They would continue to see each other through the years, but they would never work together again.

The legendary Lerner and Loewe with their hit shows and their Tony and Academy awards, their scandalous and glamorous affairs and marriages, and their famous friends and admirers, are brought back to life in this richly textured and compelling biography.

Extremely well researched and smoothly written (though all those facts and names are sometimes overwhelming), this biography tells the story not only of two individuals, but of the American musical's golden age as well.

SATURDAY Special

Crowe says Oscar-nominated role as math wizard was a stretch

By Vanessa Gera

BERLIN—Russell Crowe says his performance as a brilliant mathematician in "A Beautiful Mind," which won him an Academy Award nomination Tuesday, truly taxed his acting abilities.

"Mathematics and I parted company when I was about 14," Crowe joked.

Very special

"It's very special when the Academy recognizes something you believe in and something you've invested so much in," Crowe said.

The film dramatizes Nobel-prize winning mathematician John Nash's decades-long struggle with schizophrenia, and director Ron Howard called his nomination for best director "a very broad, wonderful acknowledgment of a movie that I care about a lot."

Almost immediately after hearing that he had been nominated, however, Howard said his thoughts turned to people considered likely award candidates who "didn't get their names called."

"I've experienced that," he said. "And that's not such a wonderful moment."

Lighter side

Crowe also said he enjoyed the lighter side of making the film, which has been nominated for best picture.

"I had a wonderful time being married to Jennifer (Connelly) for 50 years," Crowe quipped about his co-star. "I wish it could have continued, but you know, the movies aren't as good as real life."

Crowe's nomination for best actor is his third in a row after "Gladiator" and "The Insider" the year before. If he wins, he would be the first actor since Tom Hanks to take home back-to-back Oscars. *AP*

CROWE. Third nomination in a row after "The Insider" and "Gladiator."

Waiting for Ms Gretchen Barretto

By Nestor U. Torre

FOR weeks now, Channel 2 has been whetting viewers' interest in the weeknight soap "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" by plugging the imminent appearance of Ms Gretchen Barretto on the series starring her younger sister, Claudine.

Comeback

Like other viewers, we made it a point to watch the show last Monday night because that was the installment that was supposed to herald Gretchen's comeback to acting after a hiatus of many years.

Gretchen's "limited comeback" to acting is of particular interest to viewers not just because she used to be a big star when she was making one movie after another, but also because she is Claudine's *ate*.

People are touched to see her coming out of early retirement, no matter how temporarily, to boost the ratings of her younger sister's show.

In addition, Gretchen's cachet has gone up because she is now a woman of means who doesn't need to act to put food on her family's table, and yet she misses performing so much that she's facing the cameras again.

For these and other reasons, more than the usual number of viewers tuned in to "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" last Monday to catch Gretchen's first TV appearance as a performer in a number of years. They waited . . . and waited.

Sequence after sequence came and went, but still no Gretchen. Was her comeback going to be preempted, or overtaken by events?

Unexpected reappearance

Then, just a few moments after the installment ended, Gretchen finally hove into view. From what we could gather, she was the wife of Ronaldo Valdez's character, who had disappeared and was presumed dead. Now, she was making an unexpected reappearance, with a doctor *and* a psychiatrist in tow, to add yet another fresh twist to the soap's already convoluted plot.

Gretchen's initial appearance was so brief that all viewers could do was to take note of her fresh beauty (unmarred despite the intervening years) and her "classy" projection (a positive consequence of her much-publicized immersion in high society).

She also evinced a slightly tense, breathless quality that hinted at her being eager to wage emotional battles in episodes to come.

WAITING/ P. E2

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To Arnold Clavio, working is the best form of relaxation

By Edmund L. Sicam

CLAVIO. Hardworking crusader.

IT'S hard to imagine GMA's "Emergency" (Fridays, after "Front Page") hosted by anyone else but Arnold Clavio. Arnold has put his personal stamp on the public service show. Very few remember that six years ago, the man in front of the camera was actor Edu Manzano. When Edu ran for vice mayor for Makati, Arnold, who was working with the late Louie Beltran in "Brigada Siete," was chosen to replace him.

Quizmaster

Edu won in that election but lost when he challenged Jejomar Binay for the top post in Makati. Today, Edu has recovered from that loss and made an impressive showing as quizmaster on Viva TV's "The Weakest Link."

Meanwhile, his replacement, Clavio, has become one of the busiest broadcast journalists on GMA, with a daily early-morning show "Unang Hirit" from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m., a daily radio show, "Double A sa Double B" from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and the weekly "Emergency." He has also become one of the most recognizable faces on the tube.

So recognizable that, even with a disguise, he can't watch his favorite movie at the malls without people fussing over him. One time, he posed as a taxi driver for a "hidden camera" segment, but he was immediately unmasked.

What is it about Arnold that endears him to viewers? It's probably because the *masa* audience identifies with him. He's no glamour boy who's more concerned about looking good on camera. He's a hardworking crusader who helps as many people as he can with their problems.

New thrust

That seems to be the new thrust of "Emergency" on its sixth year. Arnold says the show wants to concentrate on preventing emergencies rather than reporting them. There will also be greater emphasis on public service portions, like helping people with rare diseases or seeking justice for the powerless.

With this format, it is inevitable that he will step on some big toes. Thus, he has received death threats on the phone as well as attempts from affected personalities to bribe him. His response has been to decline dinner invitations, saying he's on a diet. That way, he says, he doesn't have to deal with bribe offers.

Incidentally, it *is* true that he is on a diet. In fact, he has already lost 20 lbs., and his waistline has dropped from size 36 to 32. But he still has to lose some more pounds to reach his ideal weight.

How did he do it, lose that much weight in three months? He says he is not on any crash diet. He's just more selective about the type and the quantity of food he eats. He stays away from fatty food and eats moderately despite his hectic schedule.

Four hours of sleep

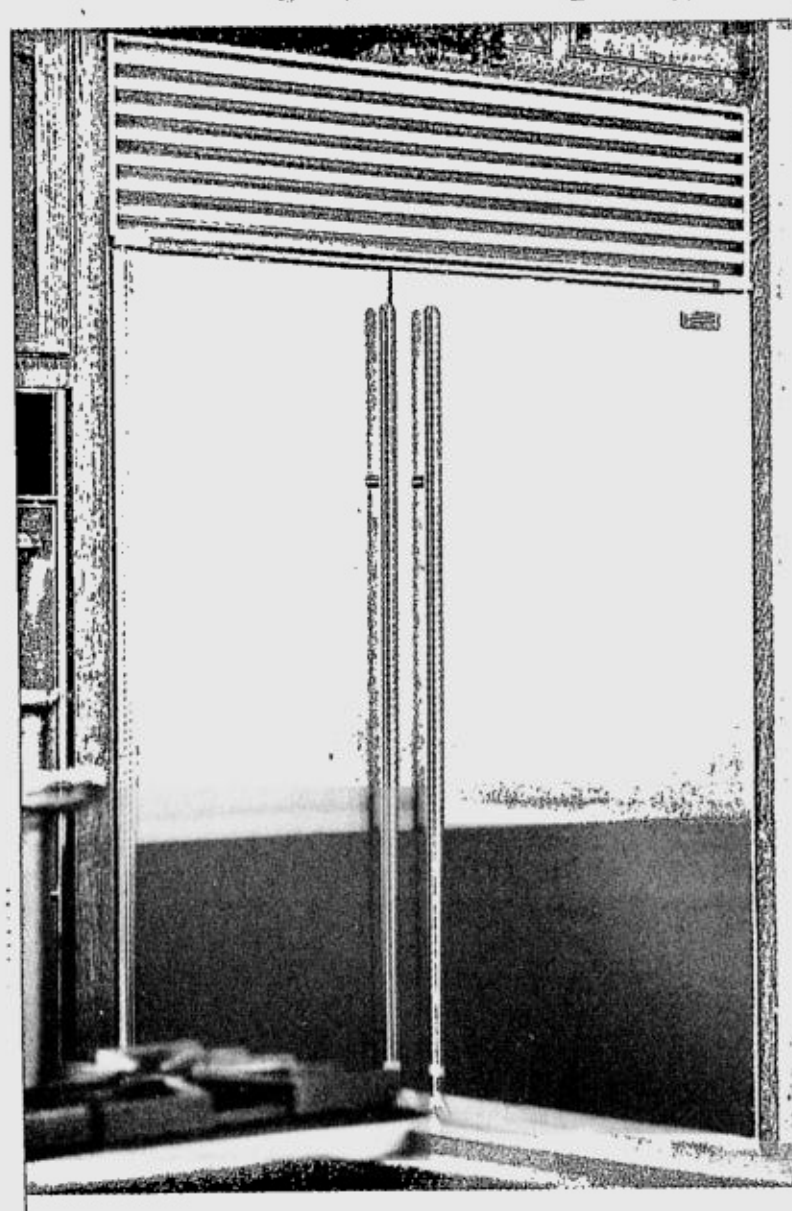
With his daily grind (he's up as early as 4 a.m. and he doesn't get to sleep before midnight), he manages to get only four hours of sleep a day. However, when he finds himself with a lot of free time, he feels uneasy.

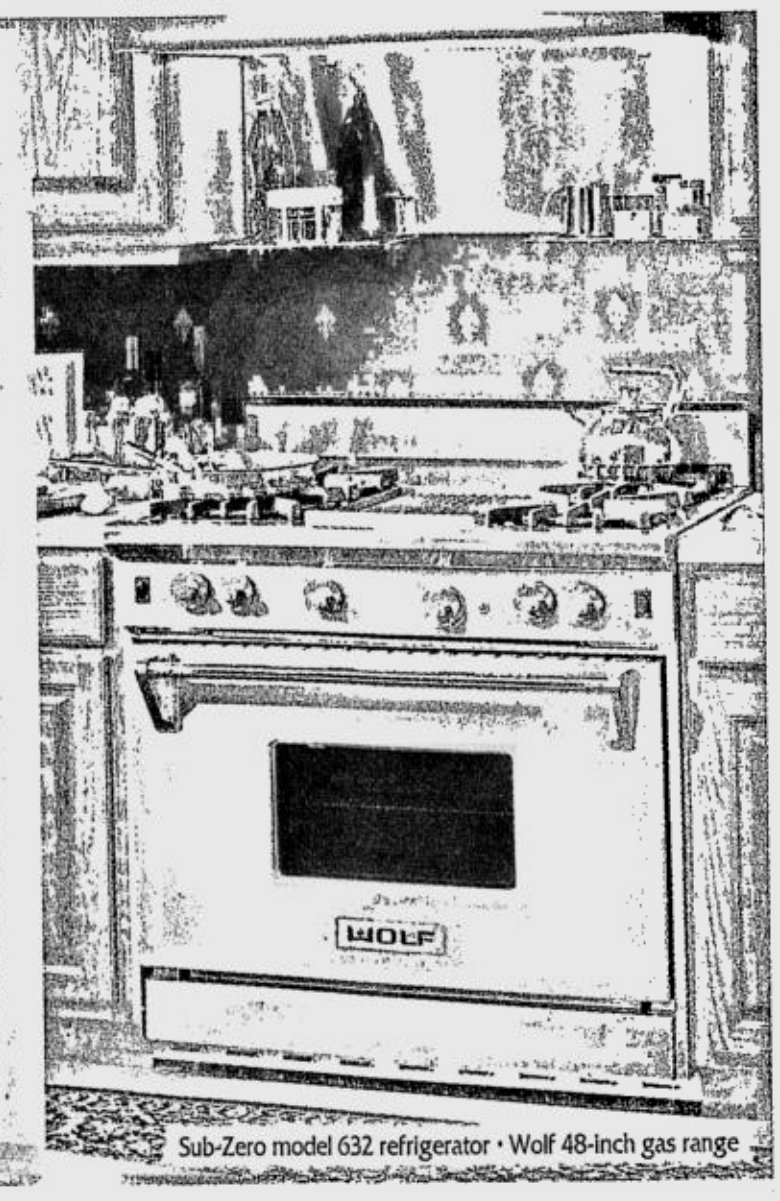
Once, he was in China and there was an opportunity to extend his stay for another week. He decided not to prolong his vacation because he wanted to get back to "Unang Hirit." To Arnold, working is the best form of relaxation. That's because he enjoys it so much that he doesn't consider it work.

Arnold, 36, started his broadcast career as a newswriter for radio station dwIZ with Bobby Guanzon. When Bobby moved to dzBB in 1989, Arnold went along, in his belief that there were more opportunities in the new station.

Since then, he has stayed with the same organization, starting out as a pinch-hitter on radio when regular talents had their days off, and moving on to TV in 1990 as an announcer on "GMA Balita." Then it was on to bigger things, joining "Brigada Siete" in 1994 and "Emergency" in 1996.

TO ARNOLD/ P. E3





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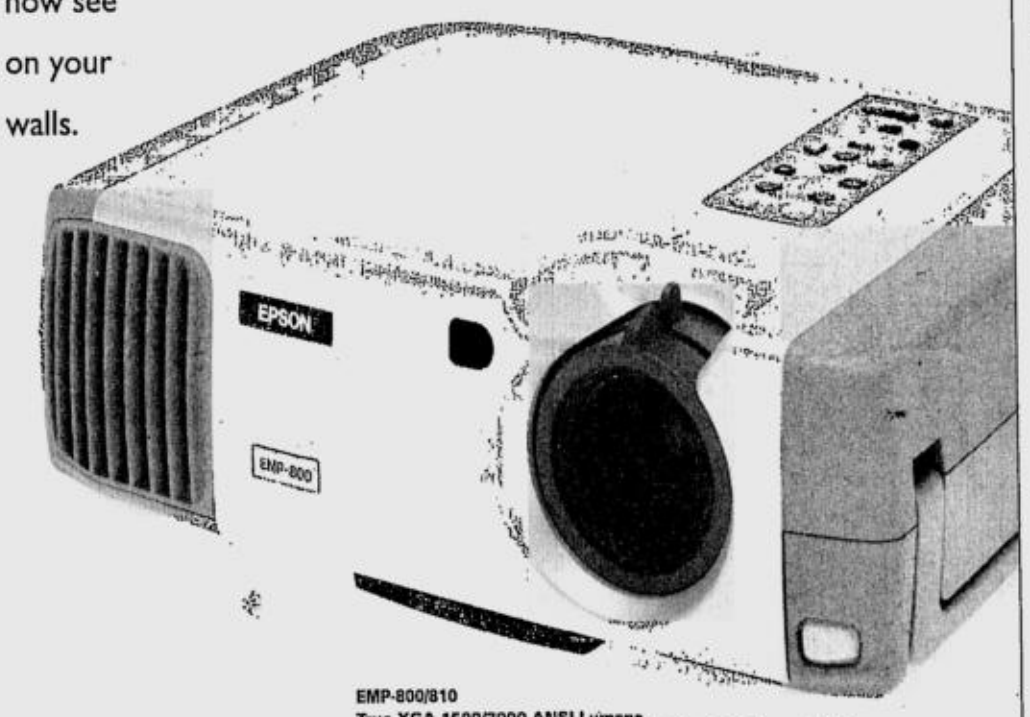

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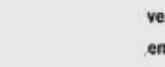

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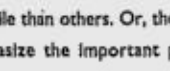

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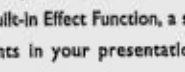

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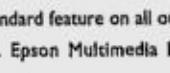

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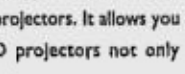

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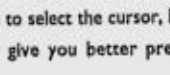

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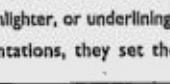

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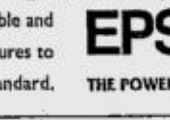

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BARRETTO. Only brief appearances thus far.

Waiting . . .

(From page E1)

Other nuances

As for other nuances to her performance, viewers would have to wait for her appearance the following night, which by rights would have to be more extensive, after her "introductory," "appetite-whetting" sequences the evening before.

Strangely enough, however, Gretchen again figured in only a couple of sequences last Tuesday night, so viewers were able to add only a few new aspects to her character as it ever-so-slowly unfolded. It was clear that they would have to watch some more installments of the series before Gretchen's character would grab the soap's main focus.

This should happen very soon, otherwise viewers' interest in the new character—and Gretchen's comeback—will rapidly ebb. After all, her inclusion in the show is regarded as a major TV event, so it should quickly be given the expected emphasis and importance.

Intent

Perhaps the delay is due to the production's intent to stretch the impact of Gretchen's involvement in the show, so that it can boost its ratings for a longer time. But this could turn out to be counter-productive if viewers refuse to go along for the (extended) ride. Your move, ABS-CBN.

P.S.: Last Wednesday, we tuned in to "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" for the third straight night, and Gretchen put in yet another brief appearance. What gives? Gretchen's fans must be chafing at the bit . . .

Get ready for Chicane

By Mary Ann A. Bautista
and Ricky T. Gallardo

AN eclectic festival of dance music by Chicane should attract a good mix of yuppies, tycoons, models, students and other music lovers today, March 16 at the Casino Filipino amphitheatre at Ninoy Aquino ave., Parañaque City.

Pumping as early as 9 p.m. and still throbbing mad until 6 a.m. Chicane promises to dish out one-of-a-kind dance and electronic tunes.

Chicane and his six-piece band produce their own dance tracks. He creates and programs them so he can play his music live. Big Fish brought in 300 kilos of equipment to guarantee good dance music. Music fans have had to wait for a year to hear Chicane's music.

Tuck Cheah explains, "Whenever we have rave parties, we ask our guests who they want to see, and they consistently answer Chicane, which was all over Europe last year. They had a gig in Red Square in Moscow."

Sony Music printed limited copies of Chicane's album and they were all sold out. His single, "Don't Give Up" featuring Bryan Adams, bumped Madonna's "Music" off from the No.1 spot in the charts.

DJ group

Back in the '80s, rap albums often featured a song primarily highlighting the DJ's skills. Executioners reversed the concept. Although you'll hear a few rhymes on their album. They center their songs around the DJ's performance. Roca Raida would rather call himself a turntablist because he can play a few chords and melodies and perform flawlessly in a full arena.

"We've all won individual championships but I would say that our biggest accomplishment is making an album as a DJ group," Roca Raida enthuses.

Things you don't know about Piolo Pascual

Piolo admits that he becomes very quiet when he gets angry. Just like Judy Ann Santos, he visits chapels on a regular basis. "Automatic *'yun kapag may nakita akong* church, *bumababa ako,"* he shares.

CHICANE. Dance and electronic tunes.

He likes *pusit* and can eat it on a daily basis. His favorite recipe is black pasta. He can even eat canned pasta.

He snores and likes to play ping-pong. "I play table tennis and billiards, and go diving and box to stay fit. When I'm upset, I just fix my room," he shares

Quality as top criterion

Mayor Lito Atienza is bent on bringing back the glory days of the Manila Film Festival.

"It's our little way of helping the local movie industry by encouraging the people, specifically Manila residents, to patronize local films," affirmed Atienza, who promises to award a cash prize to the five entries that will be chosen, aside from a 15 percent cut in the standard 30 percent entertainment tax.

But Atienza is making it clear that he wants only quality films this year. "I've told the producers that this is our bargain: For them to come up with good films that are abundant in positive values and redeeming qualities."

Atienza's office has received 43 letters of intent to participate. These will be evaluated by the screening committee, composed of Lou Veloso, Kim Atienza, Marjun Isidro, Miles Roces, Raul Camaligan, Philippson Chua, Benjamin Tayabas and Lito Banayo.

Russell Crowe is brilliant

Russell Crowe might be on his way to back-to-back Oscar victories when the Academy hands out its choices this week. We caught his movie "A Beautiful Mind" a few days ago and thought he did a brilliant job in his portrayal of Dr. John Nash.

Just recently, Crowe was declared Best Actor by his peers at the Screen Actors Guild, a very strong indication that he might win an Oscar. Crowe was judged Best Actor last year for his splendid performance in "Gladiator."

To Arnold . . .

(From page E2)

Scoop

On "Brigada," his first big assignment was doing an interview with the hostages captured by the Abu Sayyaf in 1994. This was an exclusive because he managed to be in the right place at the right time while the other reporters were somewhere else. Didn't he get scared? He says he was more scared about being scooped by his fellow reporters than about the threat to his personal safety on his first field assignment.

Having covered a lot of violent events, he felt sad when he reported on the arrest of former President Joseph Estrada. He was in Erap's residence when the warrant was served by the PNP. He was asked to get out of the house by the Estradas and when he faced the restive Erap supporters outside, he had to deal with an angry mob that felt GMA was not fair in its reportage on the former president.

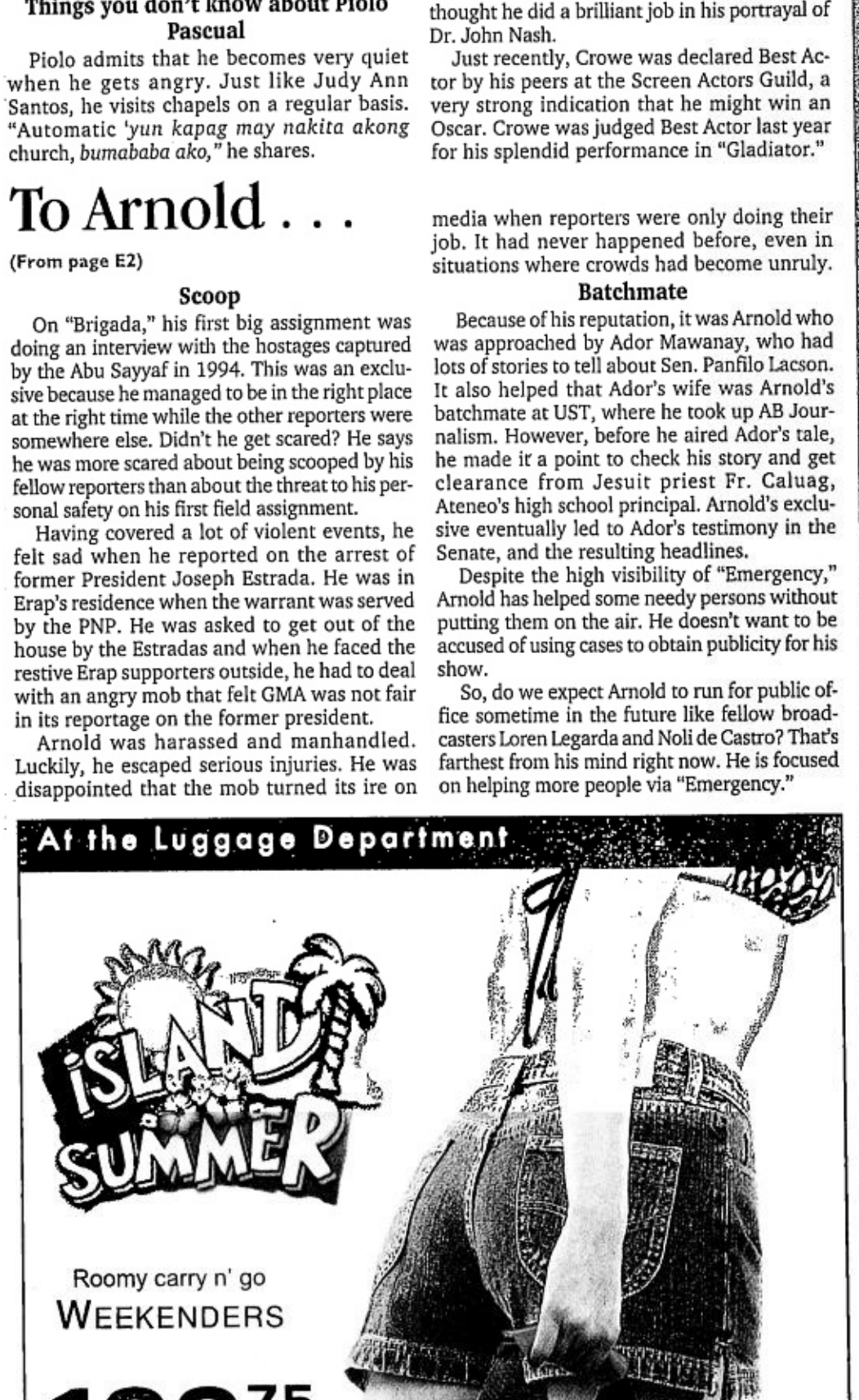
Arnold was harassed and manhandled. Luckily, he escaped serious injuries. He was disappointed that the mob turned its ire on media when reporters were only doing their job. It had never happened before, even in situations where crowds had become unruly.

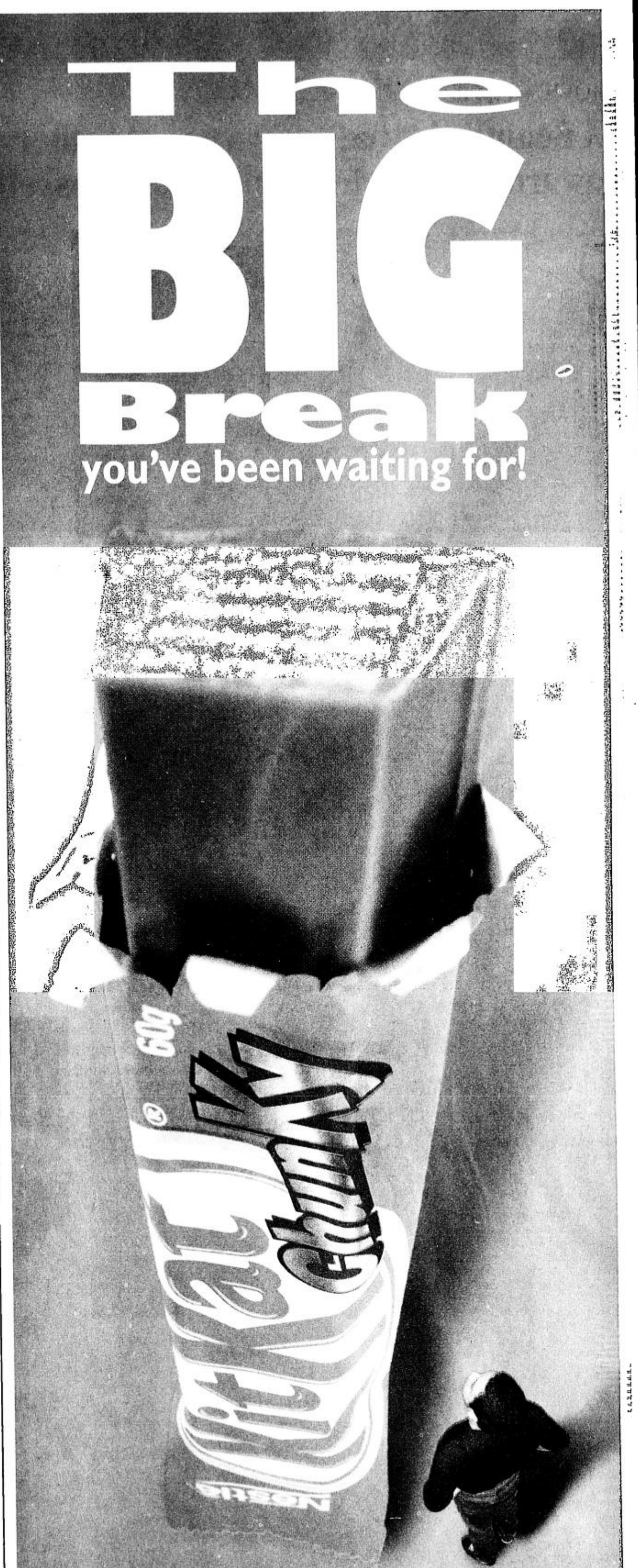
Batchmate

Because of his reputation, it was Arnold who was approached by Ador Mawanay, who had lots of stories to tell about Sen. Panfilo Lacson. It also helped that Ador's wife was Arnold's batchmate at UST, where he took up AB Journalism. However, before he aired Ador's tale, he made it a point to check his story and get clearance from Jesuit priest Fr. Caluag, Ateneo's high school principal. Arnold's exclusive eventually led to Ador's testimony in the Senate, and the resulting headlines.

Despite the high visibility of "Emergency," Arnold has helped some needy persons without putting them on the air. He doesn't want to be accused of using cases to obtain publicity for his show.

So, do we expect Arnold to run for public office sometime in the future like fellow broadcasters Loren Legarda and Noli de Castro? That's farthest from his mind right now. He is focused on helping more people via "Emergency."





MOVIE OF THE WEEK

'A Beautiful Mind' showcases another 'awardable' performance from Russell Crowe

By Nestor U. Torre

OUR kooky friends keep telling us that there's only a very thin line that divides insanity and genius. In their case, we don't know about that—but in John Forbes Nash, Jr.'s in the current film "A Beautiful Mind," definitely!

Key aspects

Nash (played by Russell Crowe) is a math genius *and* schizophrenic, and the film fuses these two key aspects of his persona so seamlessly that some viewers could end up thinking that one is the consequence of the other.

That may or may not be the case, but Nash's genius for seeing mathematical relationships in the most seemingly abstruse, unconnected and unquantifiable elements appears to be linked to the perfervid fireworks that his mental condition triggers off in his cranium.

Friends and fiends

Much more affectingly, Nash "sees" not only ornate mathematical relationships in inert masses of data, but also mental friends and fiends in the persons of his imaginary roommate, the roommate's little niece, and the taciturn head of a top-secret code-breaking group supervised by the military.

These three characters don't "exist" for anybody else other than Nash, and their "existence" seems to be for the sole function of making him look crazy to the rest of the world—so that they can eventually have him all to themselves!

Utter loneliness

Thus does the film make Nash's schizophrenia not just a mental aberration but also a perverse but still affecting expression of his utter loneliness. He is so estranged from people that his only "friends" are his troika of imaginary soulmates who almost ruin him and subvert his genius in the end.

CONNELLY. Nothing less than Nash's savior.

It's a good thing that Nash is loved by one real person, a student who later marries him and stands by him despite his wild fits of insanity. Nash's wife is played by Jennifer Connelly, a gifted American actress who's starred mostly in European productions in the past.

Portrayed by a less brilliant actress, the character of Nash's wife would have been strereotypically loving, loyal, long-suffering, etc. As vivified by Connelly, however, she is nothing less than his savior, made strong by her love for him and his genius, a fierce love that eventually enables her to help him triumph over his delusionary demons.

Memorable viewing experience

Connelly may be a brilliant actress, but it is still Nash's performance that makes this film a memorable viewing experience.

One wonders how Crowe was able to make his character's insanity look and feel so terribly real. We presume that the actor has never been this crazy in his own life, so the complete credibility of his character's mental illness is a most impressive thespic achievement.

Sometimes, however, Crowe results to facile character touches, like the duck walk he occasionally affects to make Nash look peculiar and daft. This makes Nash come off a bit like Jerry Lewis, or Tom Hanks as Forrest Gump.

Complex depiction

But this is a minor quibble. Most of the time, Crowe is on-target in his complex depiction of Nash's volatile, even self-destructive character. Crowe's performance in this film eclipses his already commendable portrayals in past movies like "L.A. Confidential," "The Insider" and "Gladiator."

In addition, he and Connelly also successfully tackle the challenge of aging before viewers' eyes, from their 20s to their 70s. Aside from the expert prosthetic work involved, the actors contribute a lot to the effectivity of this gradual transformation because their insights into the characters they play deepen as they mature.

Russell Crowe could win another Oscar later this month. For proof positive, see his exceptionally vivid and complex performance in this film.

NEWLY crowned Mutya ng La Union 2002 Rochelle Gualberto (center) with, from left, 3rd runner-up Mercy Rodriguez, 1st runner-up Karen Kay Leonardo, 2nd runner-up Shirley Gregorio and 4th runner-up Anna Katrina Bautista.

Mirror, mirror on the wall

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

IN the Philippines, one of the strongest indications that summer has already come is the mushrooming of all kinds of beauty pageants everywhere—from the biggest beauty search telecast nationwide to the smallest Mutya ng Barangay held even in some grassy, makeshift barrio hall.

Beauty contests

Yes, summer is the season of beauty contests—not just the standard type but also those for little tots, for moms, for *lolas*, for the household help, for homosexuals, etc. There's even a beauty tilt for cats and dogs—but that's another story!

Filipino women celebrate their beauty in summertime by trying to find out who's the fairest of 'em all in colorful, elaborate shows that display not just their pulchritude but also their talents, skills and intelligence.

Truth to tell, contests of this sort not only bring out the best but also the worst in the contestants—to the utter consternation or delight of the audience. Like, only in beauty tilts can we find singers who can't sing, dancers who can't dance, and the most amazing manglers of the English language—but who gamely do it all in the spirit of fair competition and good fun.

For a lot of Filipinas, joining a beauty contest is some kind of rite of passage to womanhood. It's a phase that girls go through to become ladies overnight. For many, too, it is an affirmation of their beauty—if one were a tiny bit shy or insecure about her physical attributes, she'd be hard put to make a spectacle of herself in so public a manner.

Judge

I've been to more beauty pageants than I care to count, either as judge or spectator, but never—fortunately or unfortunately—as a contestant. It wasn't because I thought these competitions demeaned women or made them look like pieces of meat, like some of my feminist friends believe. I just never dared.

Not that I was shy or insecure—I just knew, with a certainty that I never doubted, that, in my youth, I was small in places where I should have been big, and big in areas where I should have been small! But I always enjoy watching beauty contests.

And being a judge is an even greater delight. That's why when good friend and mentor Kitchie Benedicto invited me to San Fernando City to be the chair of the board of judges for the Search for Mutya ng La Union several weeks back, I said yes immediately—even though I knew the trip by car was unnervingly long.

(Pangasinan is such a huge province. I dozed off six times and it was still Pangasinan!)

Culminating activity

The pageant was the culminating event commemorating the 152nd Foundation Day of La Union. There were 17 very young and beautiful contestants, who represented the different municipalities of the province and vied for the title.

This is a yearly project of indefatigable La Union Gov. Victor Ortega and his charming wife, San Fernando City Mayor Mary Jane Ortega.

I admit, I didn't expect much from "countrified" beauty contests like this one—but I was in for a major surprise. Well, I really shouldn't have been surprised, considering that I know Kitch and her world-class level of excellence in anything she does. Whatever she puts her hands to, she also puts her mind and heart.

To say that the production values for the Search for Mutya ng La Union were at par with the televised awards nights and beauty pageants in Manila would be an understatement.

It was Kitchie who directed the entire thing and she didn't pull any punches. It was truly a joy to behold her working at something she does and loves best.

She used topnotch professionals for everything. Jotec did the stage, Bong Enriquez handled the lights (augmented with laser beams from a British guy), Rene Araojo of All Media Marketing House produced the VTRs, Vitan was in charge of the sounds, the TV production equipment was provided by Tony Tuviera's Lightscape, and the production was executed with professional flourish by KB's very own Blue Monster Crew.

Scoresheets

There were three 10x14 screens on the left, right and middle of the stage, where the VTRs were shown and the judges' scoresheets flashed. A four-cam set-up included a Jimmyjib camera for better flexibility.

I was impressed by the scoring system used. All the judges (which also included TV producer and talent manager June Rufino, composer and musician Willy Cruz, and actor Brando Legazpi) were provided with computers—the software of which was furnished by I-Create Tech.

We simply inputed our scores for the different categories and they were, like magic, automatically flashed on the screens. No room for scams here!

I was just a little mortified because it betrayed my computer illiteracy. Good thing that I had my daughter Clara with me. Now I can truly say that I appreciate her knowledge about computers.

Edu Manzano masterfully handled the hosting with Miss San Fernando City 2001 Sheryl Ann Ducusin. And the production numbers were great. The show started with an invocation but it was so creatively presented that it left me speechless.

Visual interpretation

Instead of the usual blah-blah, the song "Lift Up Your Hands" by Basil Valdez was given an awe-inspiring visual interpretation by the City Millennium Choir under black theater creative director Nonoy Sianosa.

All the production numbers were choreographed by Cesar Reynon, formerly of the VIP Dancers—and the professional edge showed. Comedienne Marissa Sanchez had the audience in stitches with her parody of the song "Ikaw." She gave different interpretations of it—mimicking Sharon Cuneta, Zsa Zsa Padilla, Lea Salonga, Sheryl Cruz, Manilyn Reynes, Geneva Cruz, Alice Dixson and Thalia. It was a riot!

Ara Mina did OK, but not as well as Marissa. I felt that Ara went through some kind of identity crisis that night: the audience expected a sexy star-performer, but Ara played it coy and conservative.

Just like other beauty contests, the show ended at past three in the morning! But everybody was awake, the crowd did not thin out as the moon traversed the night sky.

Popular choices

Especially because everybody agreed with the choices of the judges—4th runner-up was Anna Katrina Bautista, 16, from Rosario; 3rd runner-up was Mercy Rodriguez, 15, from Balaoan; 2nd runner-up was Shirley Gregorio, 18, from San Fernando City; 1st runner-up was Karen Kay Leonardo, 16, from Agoo; and the Mutya ng La Union was Rochelle Gualberto, 19, from Bauang.

It is definitely summer. And I thank Kitchie for making it particularly enjoyable for me with the Search for Mutya ng La Union. I especially enjoyed seeing her in action once more—no longer barking orders all around as she used to, but being coolly and expertly in control of everything. She produced the show and recorded it not for television, but she did it like it were for nationwide broadcast.

How I wish she were back on TV. How I wish she directed TV shows again. How I wish she could wave the wand of her special kind of magic to once more enthrall and entrance all of us. But then, I know, she's very busy helping her mom run the many affairs of the RSB Group of Companies now. But, who knows?

Dr. Vivian Gonzales revolutionizes national service training program

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THERE is a reason why Dr. Vivian A. Gonzales does not look like the typical college professor, and it is not just because she comes to class in an Army uniform every Saturday. Her dynamism is shaking the academe's foundations. Dr. Gonzales pioneered her Values Integration and Promotion (VIP) modules as the Program of Instruction for the Civic Welfare Service (CWS), congruent with the National Service Training Program (NSTP).

Memorandum

In 1999, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) issued a memorandum to all higher education institutions to adopt the VIP-CWS as the Expanded Reserve Officers' Training Corps' (ROTC) CWS component.

The VIP-CWS also took the limelight during the National Orientation Conference on the implementation of the National Service Training Program held last Oct. 24, 2001 at Camp Aguinaldo.

Dr. Gonzales piloted the VIP-CWS in 1996 at the UP Los Baños campus, where she was Dean of Students. The first time the program was tried out, 12 platoons were assigned to 12 different *barangays*. The students planted trees, conducted various environmental protection activities, held anti-drug campaigns, solid waste management seminars, anti-dengue drives, medical missions, sponsored sportsfests, and read to and donated books for children, among other activities.

Effective program

Since then, the VIP-CWS has proven to be an effective program that instills the right values in students. Those who graduated from VIP-CWS were less likely to be involved in fraternity rumbles, and learned to curb their vices and violent tendencies.

"VIP-CWS calls for students' transformation. My philosophy is that before you can claim to help other people improve the quality of their lives, as the CWS program aims to do, we must begin with ourselves. How can you convince others of their human dignity if you are unable to see it in yourself? Fortunately, we were able to make it work, regardless of the setting," Dr. Gonzales asserts.

For the first semester, students attend lectures on Values Education, Transformational Leadership, Development Management, and Social Mobilization. During the second semester, the students are allowed to put theory into practice, reaching out and immersing themselves in communities to undertake varied socially relevant projects.

Projects

To date, VIP-CWS cadets have facilitated 356 projects, which 25 *barangays* in three municipalities and one city in Laguna have benefited from.

Sounding more of a mother than a professor or military officer, Dr. Gonzales never fails to remind her cadets: "If you cannot be part of the solution, by all means don't be part of the problem. Believe that if you live your lives well, you are already fulfilling part of your social responsibility as citizens of our country."

Call telefax: (049) 536-5535 or e-mail vip_cws@lgn.csi.com.ph.

* * *

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GONZALES. "If you can't be part of the solution, don't be part of the problem."

The Golden Years return to radio

MERCADO. Started radio work at age 13.

By Chic Fortich

WITH the same innovative knack that goaded him to convert his radio program, "Kahapon Lamang," into the first-ever drama anthology on Philippine television, and after coming up with the first-ever variety show on Philippine TV, Eddie Ilarde recently pulled another coup: gathering many of the best disc jockeys and putting them all together in one station, dwBR 104.3, for a seven-hour stretch called "The Golden Years," every Sunday from noon until seven in the evening.

First show

"Ben's Kitchen" is the first show to go on, from noon to one o'clock. It's a take-off from Ben Aniceto's original program in 1955 on dzMB, "Kalatog Pinggan."

"I make sure I have very lively music, that I am lively, and I give some health tips, golf tips, food for thought, and historical notes," Ben says.

He also has, like everyone else, jokes that can make you burst out laughing.

Ben's currently writing a book on "The Golden Years of Philippine Radio." Did you know that, even before his "Kalatog Pinggan" went on the air, he had been a radio talent doing "Prinsipe Amante"?

Ben asked us to let people know that they will accept old records from anyone offering them.

Even if he tried, Prinsipe Amante and his galloping horses couldn't budge Jo San Diego from disc jockeying. Because this is what she has been doing since the late '50s, when she had a program that came after Eddie Ilarde's show.

Choice of music

"I would like to change today's young people's choice in music," she claims. "Today's songs no longer have lyrics that can be understood. When more and more young people get to appreciate *our* kind of music, that will be reward enough for me."

Whether the task is rewarding or not, Eddie Mercado doesn't seem to mind at all. He's the one who follows Jo, from three to four, and views the whole enter-

THE GOLDEN/ p.E7

The Golden Years return to radio

From page E5

prise with a good-natured smile.

"The very first time I got on radio, I was 13," he reveals. "I was doing 'Teenage Slambang' . . . but I didn't get any pay for that. I got my first real paycheck only in 1954."

His parents and relatives hadn't wanted him to be on radio, and his uncle even put him in the military stockade for doing it!

But it was all in vain: Eddie was hooked, since and the challenge was so inviting. "I never let a challenge pass me by," he says.

Cool and relaxed

From the smooth and suave Eddie Mercado, we go to the cool and relaxed Lito Gorospe. Lito began radio work also in the '50s, mainly on late night programs during which he had to play love songs, or read love poems.

But his most popular program was "Nite Owl," which began as a radio program, then became a television show, and, finally, a movie.

Bong Lapira, that old wiseacre, takes the last two-hour shift. His program is an interesting combination of living philosophies, well-researched introductions to the music, and really funny jokes.

Personalities

His show is peppered with intimate, or outrageous, talk about many personalities, local and domestic.

He had a severe stroke in 1998, from which very few expected him to recover. (His *real* friends prayed for him. His *true* friends prayed to God to let him rest. Or *they* would all die laughing.)

With a mild chuckle, he says, "God is kind to the insane and to children."

Before I give in to the almost irresistible temptation to add something to *that*, let me say quickly—tune in to dwBR, 104.3, on Sunday afternoons, and glory in the return of the Golden Years—courtesy of the old, ah . . . fogies? You'll love them!

SAN DIEGO. DJ since the late '50s.

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so we are

sensational.

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The first golden decade of the Famas–the 1950s

By Dr. Lynn S. Pareja

THE ONE thing I can clearly remember about the Famas half a century ago was the election of officers held on May 31, 1953, two weeks before the first trophies were awarded to the winners at the Riviera Night Club.

Arrangements

Rosa Rosal, Famas regent representing LVN Pictures, was credited with having made the arrangements with Riviera. But there was a discussion later on why the awards rites were held in a nightclub when a theater was the more fitting venue.

"Spotlight" columnist Vivencio R. Isaac of the Evening News (an uncle of Tempo columnist Ronaldo Constantino) described this meeting as "a stormy but well-attended session." It resulted in the drawing up of final plans for the coming event, dubbed Academy Night by the enthusiastic members.

When the smoke of battle cleared, the following emerged as the new Famas officers: Flavio G. Macaso, president; Vicente R. Generoso, vice-president; Delfin Ferrer Gamboa, secretary; Lynn M. Strait, treasurer; and Vivencio R. Isaac, press relations officer.

The Board of Regents from the Big Four producers was composed of Fred Montilla (Sampaguita Pictures), Rosa Rosal (LVN Pictures), Dr. Gerardo de Leon (Premiere Productions) and Professor Julio Esteban Anguita (Lebran Films).

FAMAS president Vic Generoso (1957-1959) is shown at Manila Hotel with Ramon Revilla, Rudy Francisco, Paraluman, Tony O'Brien, Lolita Rodriguez, Eddie Arenas and other guests during Academy Night.

Regents

These four were matched by an equal number of regents from the independent sector of the film producers: Eddie Romero (E. Romero Productions), Ariston Avelino (Peoples Pictures), Ben Perez (LGS Productions), and Pedro Santos (Padilla Bros. Productions).

Rosa Rosal was the "spark plug" of the Famas who galvanized everyone into action, leaving no stone unturned for the "first ever" Academy Night. She contacted the four radio stations—dzPI, dzRH, dzFM and dzBB—for a remote control coverage of the entire affair.

The balloons and paper horns strewn all over the place to give it a festive atmosphere were also her idea. Why paper horns, which were usually reserved only for New Year's Eve? But weren't we seeing the beginning of "a new life" for our film industry? Nevertheless, that first Academy Night of the Famas at the Riviera saw the biggest collection of press and movie people ever assembled in one place at one time.

Top honors

Eleven pictures were nominated for top honors. They were the following, in alphabetical order:

1. "Bagong Umaga" (Usis), directed by Gerry de Leon, starring Ben Perez;
2. "Basahang Ginto" (SPI), directed by Mar S. Torres, starring Alicia Vergel;
3. "Buhay Alamang" (Lebran), directed by Eddie Romero, starring Fred Montilla, Anita Linda, Mona Lisa and Tito Arevalo.
4. "Hiram na Mukha" (SPI), directed by Nardo Vercudia, starring Fred Montilla and Linda Estrella;
5. "Kalbaryo ni Hesus" (Lebran), directed by Carlos Vander Tolosa, starring Norma Blancaflor and Jennings Sturgeon;
6. "Korea" (LVN), directed by Lamberto V. Avellana, starring Jaime de la Rosa;
7. "Kuwentong Kutsero" (Dramatic Philippines), directed by Oscar del Rosario;
8. "Rebecca" (SPI), directed by Olive La Torre, starring Tessie Agana;
9. "Rodrigo de Villa" (LVN), directed by Gregorio Fernandez, starring Mario Montenegro and Delia Razon;
10. "Sabas, Ang Barbaro" (SPI), directed by Enrique Moreno, starring Pancho Magalona;
11. "Sawa sa Lumang Simboryo" (M.J. Vistan Prod.), directed by Gerry de Leon, starring Jose Padilla, Jr. and Anita Linda.

Sole entry

("Sawa . . ." was supposed to be the sole entry of Premiere Productions to the Famas derby but the studio was gripped by labor problems which had reached the courts. A court ruling temporarily prevented Premiere from making any pictures so M.J. Vistan Productions took over the completion of the "Sawa" film project. It was not until four years later, in 1957, when Premiere resumed movie-making.)

There were slots for only 10 nominated films but "Basahang Ginto" and "Kuwentong Kutsero" received the same number of votes, and Famas president Flavio Macaso decided not to break the tie. Both pictures were thus entered in the nominations for best picture.

The winner was "Sawa sa Lumang Simboryo." It was directed by Dr. Gerardo de Leon, whose other film, "Bagong Umaga," also made it to the top 10.

Gerry won the best director award for "Bagong Umaga." The same picture won for Ben Perez the best actor award. Eddie Romero shared honors with Cesar Amigo for the best screenplay award for their work in "Buhay Alamang." ***(To be concluded)***

RADCLIFFE (right) and Grint will reprise their roles in "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets."

'Harry Potter' now second biggest grosser of all time

WARNER Bros. Pictures' worldwide blockbuster and Academy Award-nominated film "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" has once again made motion picture history, earning the distinction of being the second-highest grossing film of all time.

Previous record

The combined domestic and international box office for "Harry Potter" has reached $926.1 million, eclipsing the previous record of $922.8 million held by "Star Wars: Episode 1 The Phantom Menace." The announcement was made recently by Alan Horn, President and Chief Operating Officer, Warner Bros.

"This is a remarkable achievement," Horn said. "The making, marketing and distribution of 'Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone' has been a truly collaborative effort, from J.K Rowling to the filmmakers to everyone involved in the process of bringing the magic and integrity of the novel to theaters worldwide. We're extremely proud that audiences around the globe have embraced 'Harry Potter' so enthusiastically, and we thank all of the fans for their passion and support."

Pot of gold

Adding to its already massive pot of gold, "Potter" officially surpassed "Phantom Menace's" $922.8 million global take in a little less than three months. It's more than halfway to challenging "Titanic" whose seemingly unsinkable $1.8 billion gross leads the all-time international box-office hits list.

With Harry moving up, the new top five worldwide look like this: "Titanic" ($1.8 billion), "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" ($926.1 million), "The Phantom Menace" ($922.8 million), "Jurassic Park" ($914.3 million) and "Independence Day" ($807.8 million).

Meanwhile, Jason Isaacs ("Black Hawk Down") has joined Kenneth Branagh ("Wild Wild West") in the cast of "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," the much-anticipated sequel to "Sorcerer's Stone."

As previously announced, multi-talented actor-writer-director Branagh will play an egotistical new arrival at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Isaacs is set for the role of the malevolent Lucius Malfoy.

Young wizard

The next feature film installment of author J.K. Rowling's best-selling "Harry Potter" series, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" finds young wizard Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) and his friends Ron Weasley (Rupert Grint) and Hermione Granger (Emma Watson) facing new challenges during their second year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry as they try to uncover a dark force that is terrorizing the school.

"Sorcerer's Stone" director Chris Columbus and producer David Heyman will reprise their filmmaking roles on "Chamber of Secrets," along with executive producers Mark Radcliffe ("Mrs. Doubtfire," "Stepmom," "Home Alone 2") and Michael Barnathan ("Stepmom," "Nine Months").

In additional casting news, Miriam Margolyes ("Cats and Dogs") has been cast to play the green-fingered Professor Sprout, and Mark Williams ("Shakespeare in Love") is set to take on the role of Ron's father, Mr. Weasley.

Other new cast additions include: Shirley Henderson ("Bridget Jones's Diary") as the ghostly figure of Moaning Myrtle; Gemma Jones ("Sense and Sensibility") who will portray Madam Pomfrey; and Sally Mortemore, who makes her feature film debut as librarian Madam Pince.

Acclaimed actors

Reprising their roles from "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" are acclaimed actors John Cleese ("The World Is Not Enough") as Nearly Headless Nick; Robbie Coltrane ("The World Is Not Enough") as the gentle giant Hagrid; Warwick Davis ("Willow") as Master of Levitation professor Flitwick; Richard Griffiths ("Sleepy Hollow") as Harry's Uncle Vernon; Richard Harris ("Gladiator") as Hogwart's all-knowing Professor Dumbledore; Alan Rickman ("Sense and Sensibility") as the enigmatic Potions Professor Snape; Fiona Shaw ("My Left Foot") as Harry's Aunt Petunia; Dame Maggie Smith ("Gosford Park") as Dumbledore's loyal deputy Professor McGonagall; and Julie Walters (Billy Elliot) as Mrs. Weasley. Tom Felton ("Anna and the King") will once again play Harry Potter's archenemy, Draco Malfoy.

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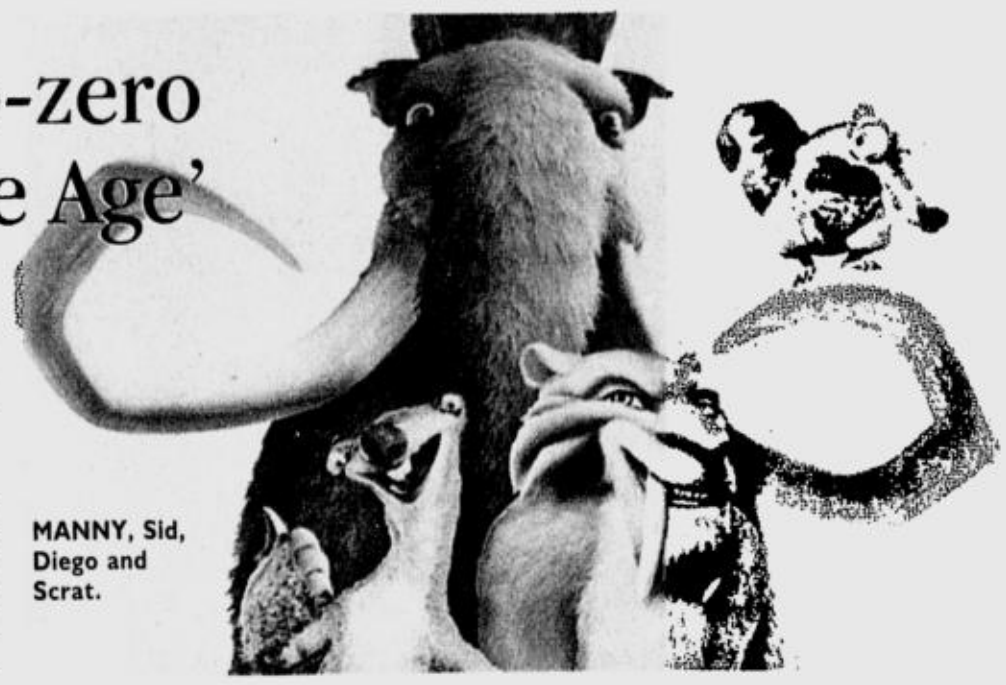

MANNY, Sid, Diego and Scrat.

A SABER-toothed tiger, a woolly mammoth, a dim-witted sloth and a human infant. Together they make up the world's first dysfunctional family in "Ice Age," the eye-popping, all-digital animated feature from Twentieth Century Fox Animation.

Family film

This delightful family film takes us into the unexplored world of an ice-age—and introduced us to four unlikely allies: Manny, "The Heavy" mammoth voiced by Ray Romano; Sid, "The Smooth Operator" sloth voiced by John Leguizamo; Diego, "The Double Agent" tiger voiced by Dennis Leary, and the acorn-loving Scrat, "The Squeak Attack."

Twenty thousand years ago, the Earth was being overrun by glaciers, and creatures everywhere were fleeing the onslaught of the new Ice Age. In this time of peril, a quartet of misfits unexpectedly, and reluctantly, comes together in a quest to return a human infant to his father. Braving boiling lava pits, treacherous ice caves, freezing temperatures and a secret, evil plot, these "sub-zeros" become the world's first heroes!

"It's a comedy of peril," says director Chris Wedge, who at times also referred to "Ice Age" as "three prehistoric mammals and a baby." Producer Lori Forte calls the movie "a story about the first dysfunctional family."

Buddy picture

Others on the production team would refer to it as a buddy picture or even a road movie (without the car, of course).

But more than anything else, Wedge insists, "Ice Age" is about four characters, three of which unexpectedly come together to form a family, while the fourth helps bring on an ice age that descends upon these characters like a curtain coming down.

"Each character is on a journey for his own personal reasons, each having his own agenda. Coming together was not a situation that any of them expected, or thought they needed."

These figures and the relationships that develop between them form the heart and soul of "Ice Age." When we first meet Manny, the massive woolly mammoth is walking against the tide of creatures migrating south, fleeing the onslaught of the ice age.

"Manny's a lonely, aloof high plains drifter," says Wedge. "He's heading north just because everyone else is heading south." Adds Ray Romano: "Manny is a bit of a misanthrope, he doesn't really like or have the time for anyone. But his gruff exterior hides a good heart. And he has principles, so when he meets Sid, the human baby and Diego, he has to help."

Journey

A different kind of relationship is provided by the dynamic between Manny and Sid, the terminally lazy sloth who joins Manny, much against the latter's wishes, in a journey that neither expected. "Manny sees Sid as a thorn in his side," says Ray Monano, "but Manny ultimately sees something in him. Sid brings out the good in Manny; it's a little like an older brother/ younger brother relationship.

Sid's over-the-top antics, combined with his endearing qualities, makes him the comic core of the movie. "Sid is possibly the reason sloths got their reputation," notes Wedge. "He's a lazy guy who knows he's about to become someone's meal unless he hooks up with a big brother, a bodyguard, so he gloms onto Manny."

The third member of the wacky triumvirate, Diego, the saber-toothed tiger, has an agenda that has more to do with survival than striking up friendships with a wooly mammoth and a sloth. Like Manny, Diego has an acerbic quality with a heart that he has yet to be able to show.

"He never knew what family is, or what friends are," notes Wedge, who conceived Diego and his fellow tigers as a militant faction of animals trying to figure out how they are going to survive the ice age. "We treat them like a combat unit."

Knowing when to walk away from superstardom

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME years ago, Jerry Seinfeld shocked his millions of fans all over the world when he quit his hit TV comedy show. They were thrown for an even bigger loop when he was offered $200 M to stay with the show, and he passed up that juicy bonus as well!

Sitcom

After he left the show, US TV's megastar explained why he had decided to walk away from his incredibly successful sitcom:

He had told himself years ago that he would continue to do the show only if he could keep it fresh, and now he felt that he was starting to repeat himself, so it was time to go.

He had been working nonstop for more than a decade, and he wanted to concentrate on personal matters, for a change.

His fans wouldn't really miss him because his show would be replayed for many years all over the world.

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Knowing when to walk away . . .

(From page F1)

Rich enough

And, he was rich enough! Why make such a big deal about earning another $200 M when he already had enough money in the bank to last him for 10 lifetimes?

So, against the advice of many people, and despite the entreaties of his legions of fans worldwide, Seinfeld pulled the plug on his fantastically successful career, turned his back on fame and fortune, and went from TV superstar to private person overnight.

He knew many people wouldn't understand his "ungrateful" act, but it was something that he had to do. Stardom and wealth were important, but so was his private life—and knowing when to stop.

Departure

These thoughts come to mind at this time because we've just heard that another major TV luminary, Oprah Winfrey, is also about to walk away from superstardom. Her departure won't be as abrupt as Seinfeld's but it's eventually going to happen, so her fans are similarly asking why.

Oprah is set to quit her long-running talk show after the 2005-2006 season, after many highly prosperous and acclaimed years on the tube. Her show is seen on 280 TV stations in the States, and is syndicated in 100 countries all over the world.

Oprah has made a name for herself as a talk show host who focuses, not on controversy and scandal, but on the emotional and spiritual aspects of life and relationships.

She also coaxes her female viewers to take stock of their lives, stop getting bogged down in trivial pursuits, fight the limitations imposed on them by traditionally male-dominated society, and pursue their goals and dreams.

SEINFELD AND WINFREY. Need to focus on the private and personal, for a change.

Positive thrusts

Oprah has been very successful at pushing for these positive thrusts, so why is she leaving her show? Well, 20 years of weekday TV can run even the best and most committed talent down, and Oprah isn't getting any younger.

She, too, feels the need to focus on the private and personal, for a change. Besides, she has other business concerns, like her magazine, to keep her busy.

Most importantly, she has developed younger female talents who can now make a go of their own TV careers because she has created a more welcoming climate for them.

Thus, despite the fact that she will be giving up more than $100 M in TV income annually, Oprah is opting to leave in a few years' time—on her 25th anniversary on the tube. And her fans shouldn't worry that she'll end up on the dole: she has a net worth of $800 M!

Local show biz

On the local show biz front, some of our biggest stars are loath to leave because their fame and fortune define them. The leaving and turning down happen in another way: for instance both Dolphy and Fernando Poe, Jr. have been nixing offers for them to run for president of the country. With their popularity, they could very well win—and that, they consistently say, would be the problem!

In their own way, FPJ and Dolphy also know when to walk away—from political superstardom. Thanks!

The best cutlery

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daza

THERE are two ways to view cooking. To some, it is a chore they would rather avoid. To many like me, it is an adventure always waiting to be discovered and enjoyed. In the years that I have spent in the kitchen, I have always stressed the importance of getting good quality cookware and cutlery for better results.

Yes, they can be expensive but in the long run, it will save the consumer from having to buy and replace the inferior-quality products they thought would last. For pots and pans, I choose to use Tefal and Circullon. There are many superior products that have surfaced such as Salad Master, Magnalite or Calfalon. These pots and pans are sturdy, nice and heavy. Whenever they conduct heat, it is distributed equally.

Preferences

Among the best cutlery I have come across are the ones made in Germany. These are nice and heavy, with the blades all the way to the tip of the handle, one of the characteristics of a quality knife. With these preferences, I am in constant search of better cutlery.

All this changed a few months back. I was introduced to a company that makes the most amazing cutlery I have come across. Unlike the wooden or plastic handles, their knife handles are made from the same material used in making bowling balls or motorcycle helmets. The handle has a beautiful, comfortable and most of all, functional design called a wedge lock.

The blades are made from the best steel money can buy (440A grade steel). There are two types of blades,the straight edge and the serrated edge. The straight edge cuts with the entire blade, hits the cutting board and if the steel isn't superior, its quality will easily dull. The serrated edge cuts with the points and when these go dull, they can never be sharpened.

Version

The knife I tried is called the Double-D Edge. This is their version of the serrated edge, but the points do not cut. The points are used to protect the three-sided blades (front, back and top). Unbelievably sharp!

I have been using these knives for many months now, looking out for any flaws. The only one I have encountered: the straight edge does need sharpening after months of everyday use. I would say for every 30 times you sharpen the best German knives, you sharpen this one once. I use the other knives to cut meat, poultry, peel fruits, cut vegetables, etc. The results are impressive.

The steak knives are so sharp, even my five-year-old daughter cuts her own steak. Dangerous? Definitely! I cut myself once and that was the only time I wished they weren't that sharp. But then again, it is when a knife is dull that it is more dangerous (when it slips).

Potato peeler

Their scissors are so sturdy, they do wonders in cutting poultry. There are different kinds of knives for various uses: trimmer, spatula spreader, petit carver, turning fork, butcher knife, slicer, carving fork, carver, and table knives. Even the potato peeler is beyond belief.

Is it expensive? It is three times better than the German knives, so, it should be at least double in price. But it costs less than the German knives and has a lifetime warranty.

Now, spending time in the kitchen has become even more enjoyable because I have superior "toys" to play with. They will also last a lifetime. Enjoy your cooking!

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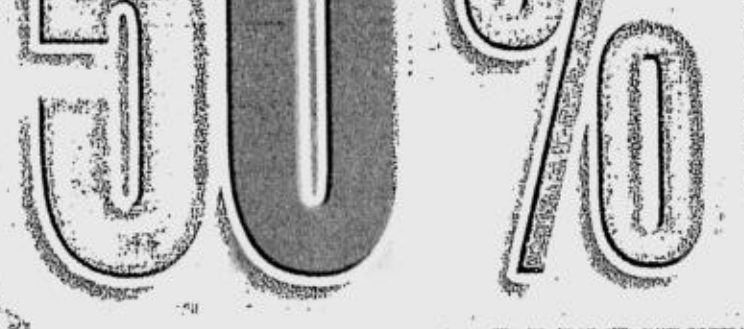

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HERMOSA. Empathetic performance in "Pangako Sa 'Yo."

DIZON. Viciously villainous in "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan."

What's your favorite local TV soap?

By Noelani Torre

THE TV soap opera has been here forever, it seems, and it looks like it will remain on the tube for many more years to come. We just can't seem to get enough of them. We cheerfully devour all that melodrama, murder, children switched at birth, and maids who marry their employers. Maybe it's because we like seeing other people suffer and we enjoy giving them the happy endings that rarely happen in real life.

Latino telenovelas have stolen some of the limelight from their local counterparts, but for the past year at least, the latter have been steadily regaining viewership. New stars and better scripts (or so they say) are more or less responsible for this and the average viewer hasn't been complaining—so far.

Given that our local soaps have found their audiences again, we thought of asking some viewers which soap it was that they liked to watch—and why. Here are their responses:

Teleseries

"'Pangako Sa 'Yo.' *Gusto ko yung istorya ng buhay ni* Ina, *na anak-mayaman talaga siya dapat. Pero kahit lumaki siyang mahirap, nakuha pa rin niyang umasenso. Sa lahat ng mga* teleseries *na lumalabas ngayon, ito yung may pinakamagandang istorya.*

"Pinapanood ko din ito dahil maayos ang mga artista. Magaling si Kristine Hermosa *bilang* Ina, *at napapantayan din naman siya ni* Jericho Rosales*."—**Luisito Roxas, 51.***

Story

"'Pangako Sa 'Yo' is my favorite soap mainly because of the story. The heroine, Ina, starts out as a *katulong* but she manages to create a better life for herself and her family. It's more or less a rags-to-riches story but it's not an easy journey and Ina has to exert a lot of effort. I like that because it's more realistic.

"Being a hopeless romantic, I also like the love story of Ina and Angelo (Jericho Rosales), the fact that he stood by her and defended their love. (Divine!) This is a feel-good soap and much lighter than 'Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan,' where everything is heavy with hate.

"I also look out for Eula Valdez's stunning outfits and, of course, for Jericho Rosales, who is one of the most good-looking young male stars we have now. And he can act, too!"--***Jopet Abigail Idul, 18.***

Effective

"'Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan.' I love Mylene Dizon because she's really very good as a villain. Her facial expressions, gestures, speech, etc. are very effective. She'll really make you angry, or irritate you, at the least.

"The story is also unique. It differs from the other soaps in that there are actually two stories that are separated by time but are still connected.

"I used to love watching Dondie, Claudine's gay best friend, but they killed him, so *sayang*. He added an element of fun. I think Matet de Leon is also a very effective actress. Most of the actors in this show are good, as a matter of fact.

"I also like the Benjie-Claudine-Clarence love team because it's more complicated than usual, and more challenging. This is the soap *na aabangan mo talaga."—**Clemor Cordova, 18.***

Social class

"'Pangako Sa 'Yo.' I like the story best. The lead character and her mother both come from a poor background, they both fall in love with men who are not from their social class, and they both suffer because of this.

"But they strive and they don't give up and, in the end, love conquers all. Also, the show sometimes reflects what's happening in the country, so it's deeper and more realistic.

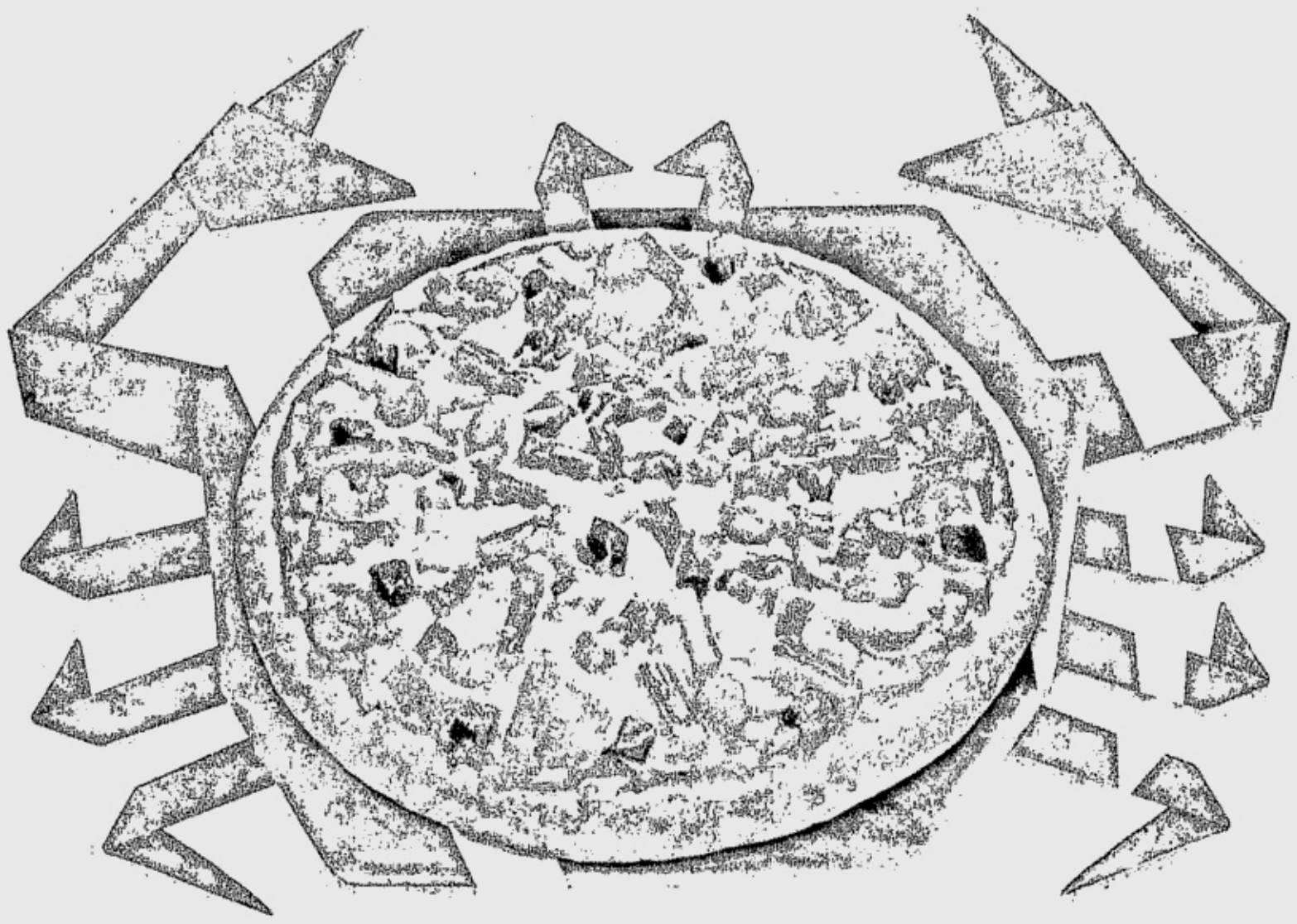
"Kristine Hermosa has turned out to be a fine actress—she wasn't very good at first—and I think she's developing with every episode. The other actors are also good and they provide strong support. There's also the *kilig* factor which people our age usually enjoy."—***Janice Adrados, 17.***

Interesting

"'Pangako Sa 'Yo.' The plot is different, and it's more interesting. In other soaps, you can predict what's going to happen next, but not here.

"The love story isn't just the tale of one couple but of two who come from different generations—and so viewers from my generation as well as those from the older generation can equally relate.

"*Pinoys* are always appreciative of rags-to-riches stories, probably because most of us are poor. Seeing things like that happen to people on the screen gives us hope that maybe luck will also smile on us and we too will get rich someday."—***Chewie Pabiran, 22.***



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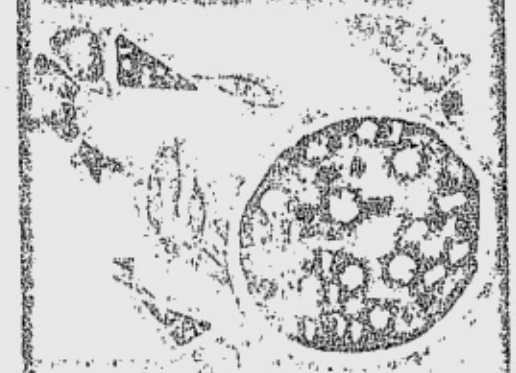

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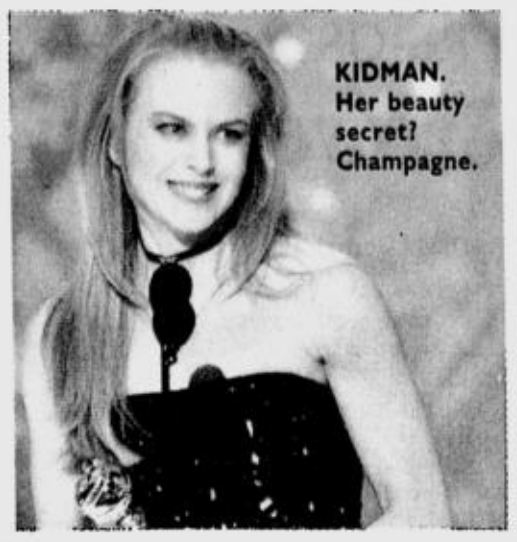


Need an Oscar date? So does Nicole

By Bob Tourtellotte

LOS ANGELES—Nicole needs a date, Will is the class clown, although Russell has a wicked little limerick of his own. And Sissy? She just wants to party!

Sound like a college class? It is, sort of.

Lunch

Oscar's nominee Class of 2001 including Nicole Kidman, Will Smith, Russell Crowe and Sissy Spacek met on Monday at a lunch given by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which awards Hollywood's top film honors, the Oscars, on March 24.

With Oscar night jitters still two weeks away, most of the nominees could let their guards down—a little.

"I'd feel better if this award was at the Grammys," joked rapper-turned-actor Will Smith when asked about being nominated for best actor against the likes of Denzel Washington.

The Grammys are the music industry's Oscar equivalent.

Smith, who plays legendary boxer Muhammad Ali in "Ali," is up for best actor against Crowe in mental illness drama "A Beautiful Mind," Washington in cop movie "Training Day," Tom Wilkinson in "In the Bedroom," about a grieving family and Sean Penn, who portrays a mentally challenged man in "I Am Sam."

Competition

"I don't care who wins," he said about his competition, "At this point, I'm just happy to be at the big dance."

And for a young actor looking to sneak past the guards outside the new Kodak Theater here where this year's ceremony will be held, what better way to do it than beside Nicole.

"I don't really have anyone to bring at the moment," she told reporters, then added, "so I'm looking."

One clue here for would-be suitors, when asked what her beauty secret is, Kidman replied, "Ah, champagne."

So guys, stock up that limousine on Oscar night.

Among the best actress nominees, Kidman plays nightclub singer Satine in the musical "Moulin Rouge" and Halle Berry is in the racially-charged drama "Monster's Ball."

Other best actress nominees are Judi Dench in "Iris," about British philosopher Iris Murdoch, Renee Zellweger in the comedy "Bridget Jones's Diary" and Sissy Spacek for "In the Bedroom."

Spacek told reporters that, sure, she'd like to win the Oscar, but there's "only one award and five nominees."

"It's all really about the performances," she said, then added, "and the parties."

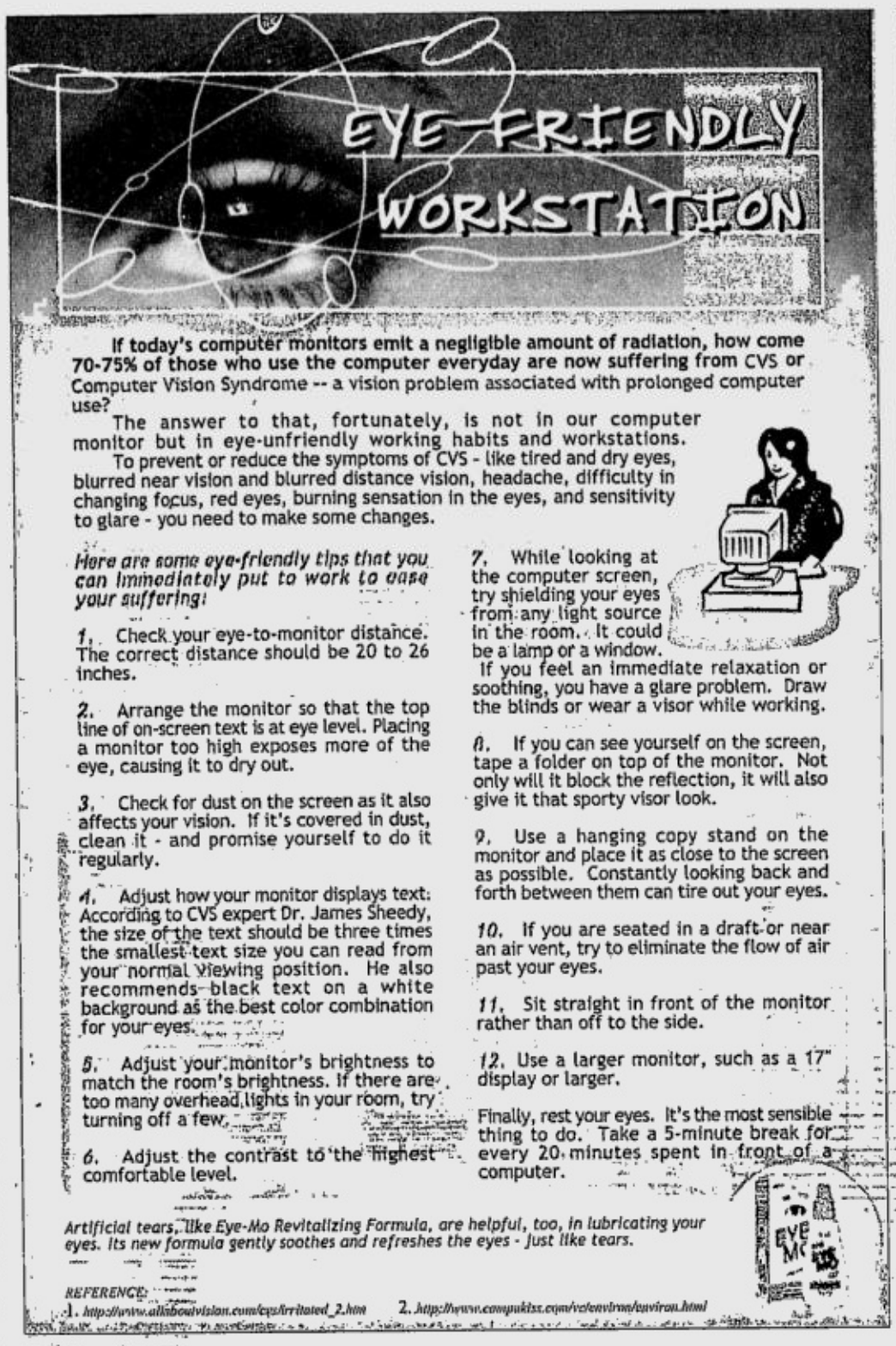
It seems Sissy has a little streak of naughtiness in her.

So does Crowe. He told reporters he'd been thinking a lot about poetry lately, then recited a limerick about a man from Australia who paints his backside like a dahlia.

Hot water

A little over a week ago, Crowe found himself in some hot water in London after berating a TV producer who cut his poem from the British Academy Film Awards. Crowe later apologized.

NEED/ p.G2



If today's computer monitors emit a negligible amount of radiation, how come 70-75% of those who use the computer everyday are now suffering from CVS or Computer Vision Syndrome -- a vision problem associated with prolonged computer use?

The answer to that, fortunately, is not in our computer monitor but in eye-unfriendly working habits and workstations.

To prevent or reduce the symptoms of CVS - like tired and dry eyes, blurred near vision and blurred distance vision, headache, difficulty in changing focus, red eyes, burning sensation in the eyes, and sensitivity to glare - you need to make some changes.

Here are some eye-friendly tips that you can immediately put to work to ease your suffering:

1. Check your eye-to-monitor distance. The correct distance should be 20 to 26 inches.

2. Arrange the monitor so that the top line of on-screen text is at eye level. Placing a monitor too high exposes more of the eye, causing it to dry out.

3. Check for dust on the screen as it also affects your vision. If it's covered in dust, clean it - and promise yourself to do it regularly.

4. Adjust how your monitor displays text: According to CVS expert Dr. James Sheedy, the size of the text should be three times the smallest text size you can read from your normal viewing position. He also recommends black text on a white background as the best color combination for your eyes.

5. Adjust your monitor's brightness to match the room's brightness. If there are too many overhead lights in your room, try turning off a few.

6. Adjust the contrast to the highest comfortable level.

7. While looking at the computer screen, try shielding your eyes from any light source in the room. It could be a lamp or a window.
If you feel an immediate relaxation or soothing, you have a glare problem. Draw the blinds or wear a visor while working.

8. If you can see yourself on the screen, tape a folder on top of the monitor. Not only will it block the reflection, it will also give it that sporty visor look.

9. Use a hanging copy stand on the monitor and place it as close to the screen as possible. Constantly looking back and forth between them can tire out your eyes.

10. If you are seated in a draft or near an air vent, try to eliminate the flow of air past your eyes.

11. Sit straight in front of the monitor rather than off to the side.

12. Use a larger monitor, such as a 17" display or larger.

Finally, rest your eyes. It's the most sensible thing to do. Take a 5-minute break for every 20 minutes spent in front of a computer.

Artificial tears, like Eye-Mo Revitalizing Formula, are helpful, too, in lubricating your eyes. Its new formula gently soothes and refreshes the eyes - just like tears.

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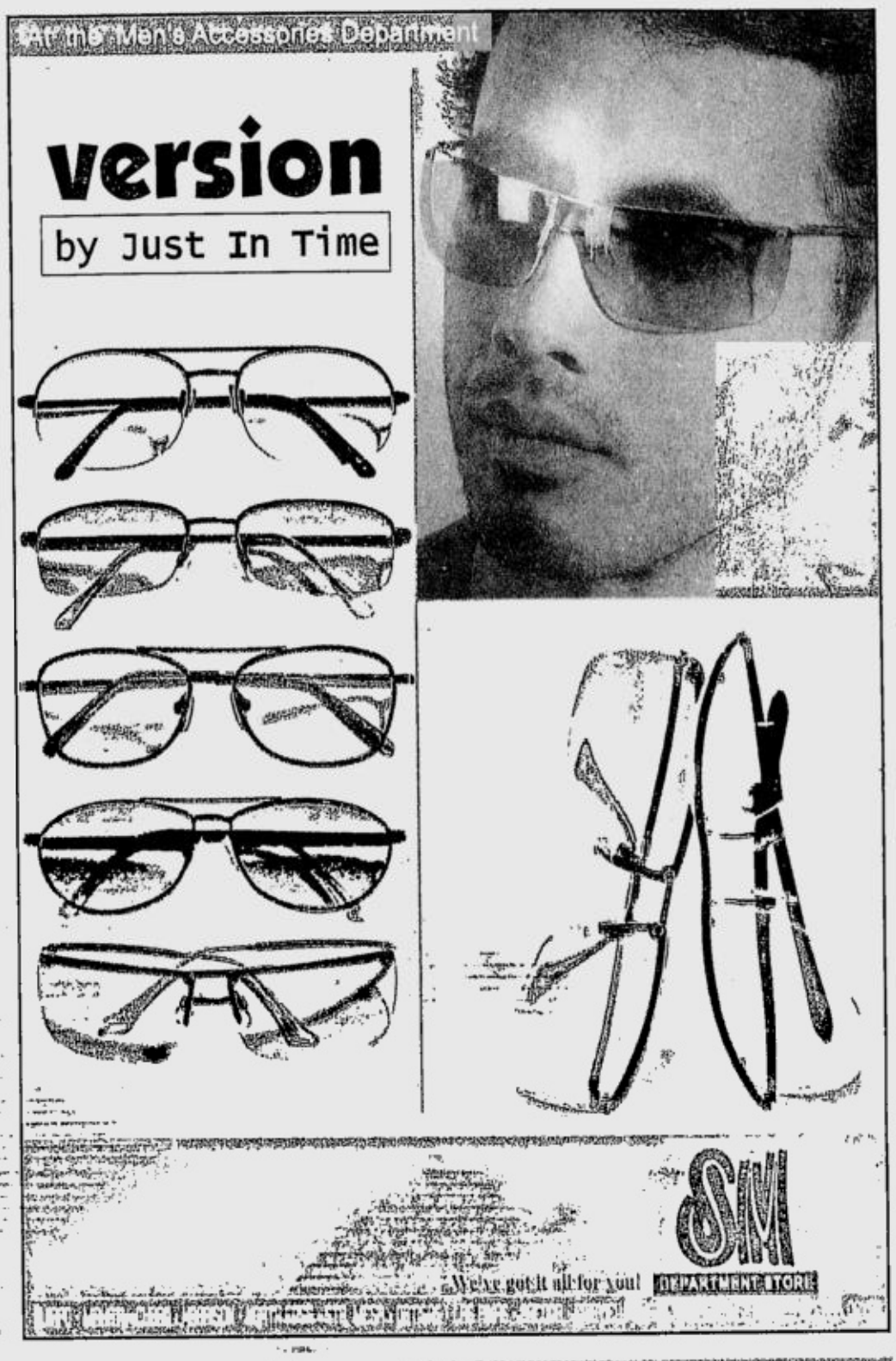
1. http://www.allaboutvision.com/cvs/irritated_2.htm 2. http://www.compuklss.com/relenvirm/environ.html



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PRE-OSCAR AWARD WINNERS

Crowe, Berry take top honors at Screen Actors Guild awards

By David Germain

LOS ANGELES—Russell Crowe was named best actor at the Screen Actors Guild Awards for his role as delusional math genius John Nash in "A Beautiful Mind," a win that could boost his chances to win back-to-back Academy Awards.

Widow

Halle Berry won for best actress as the widow of an executed death row inmate who becomes involved with one of her husband's guards in "Monster's Ball."

Crowe won the lead-actor Oscar last year for "Gladiator." If he wins for "A Beautiful Mind," Crowe would be the first actor to win two straight Oscars since Tom Hanks won best-actor for "Philadelphia" and "Forrest Gump" in 1993 and 1994.

"This is a great job, and I want to encourage every one of you in this room to give everything you can to the story," Crowe said at Sunday's awards ceremony. "God bless narrative. God bless originality."

The guild awards provide a good glimpse at how the Oscars might shake out on March 24. In SAG's seven previous awards shows, 11 of 14 lead-acting recipients went on to win Oscars, including last year's best-actress winner, Julia Roberts for "Erin Brockovich."

"I want to thank the entire cast," Berry said. "Any actress knows that she is only as good as the cast that surrounds her. They are so good, and every single day, they forced me to grow, to learn and to be better."

BERRY. Won for her performance in "Monster's Ball."

"Gosford Park," Robert Altman's combination murder mystery and class-war satire, won for best ensemble film cast.

Noble wizard

Ian McKellen won the supporting-actor honor for his turn as the noble wizard Gandalf in "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring." Helen Mirren took the supporting-actress prize as a coolly efficient housekeeper in "Gosford Park."

"In medieval Britain, actors were called rogues and vagabonds, and we are actually rogues and vagabonds, no matter how we look tonight," Mirren said. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart, all you rogues and vagabonds."

Past guild president Edward Asner, star of the television series "Lou Grant" and a co-star on "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," was honored with a life-achievement award.

"Here's to all the crews, casting directors, directors, writers, producers, and of course, all those people of good taste who liked my work and made this award possible," Asner said.

The acting honors closed the final big weekend of Hollywood awards before the Oscars. Chosen by the Screen Actors Guild's 98,000 members, the awards are given in five film and eight television categories.

"The West Wing" swept the dramatic television awards. Martin Sheen won for best actor and Allison Janney for best actress, while the show's cast won the ensemble acting prize.

Gratifying

"I think I'm the oldest guy in the room, with the possible exception of Robert Altman," Sheen said. "So this is very, very gratifying, to get to a place and a place in my career where these kinds of things are happening."

Megan Mullally and Sean Hayes of "Will & Grace" won top acting honors for a comedy TV series. "Sex and the City" won the cast award for comedy show.

"Sex and the City," a Manhattan-based series, resumes production for next season Wednesday, two days after the six-month anniversary of the terrorist attacks at the World Trade Center.

Co-star Kim Cattrall said backstage she did not know how the show was going to deal with the attacks, but that "I think we need to go on and learn from this and get stronger, and enjoy life."

In awards handed out Saturday by the Directors Guild of America, "A Beautiful Mind" director Ron Howard took the top filmmaking honor. The DGA awards are considered one of the most accurate barometers of Oscar success.

In the television categories, Todd Holland claimed a comedy award for directing an episode of Fox's "Malcolm in the Middle," while Alan Ball got the dramatic series award for the pilot episode of HBO's "Six Feet Under."

Co-directors Joel Gallen and Beth McCarthy-Miller won in the musical/variety category for the multiple-network Sept. 11 telethon "America: A Tribute to Heroes." ***AP***

'Moulin Rouge' gets Oscar boost from producers

LOS ANGELES—The colorful Nicole Kidman musical "Moulin Rouge" received a much-needed Oscar boost on Sunday when an influential group of Hollywood producers named it the best picture of the year.

In the last 12 years the Producers Guild of America has handed out the prize, nine have gone on to win best picture at the Academy Awards, including "Gladiator" in 2001, and "American Beauty" in 2000.

Laggard

The award is important for "Moulin Rouge," which had been considered a laggard in the race for Hollywood's top honors, in part because its Australian mastermind Baz Luhrmann did not receive an Oscar nod for direction.

Instead, Oscar pundits have narrowed the best picture race down to "The Fellowship of the Ring," which leads the field of nominees with 13 nods, and "A Beautiful Mind," which received eight nominations along with "Moulin Rouge."

"MOULIN ROUGE." No nomination for its director.

Other producers

Although Luhrmann was omitted from the best director race, he was one of the three "Moulin Rouge" producers, and will win an Oscar if his film is named best picture on March 24. The other producers were Fred Baron and Martin Brown.

Kidman was the only "Moulin Rouge" star to receive an Oscar nomination. In January, she won a Golden Globe for her lead role as a courtesan at the titular Paris hotspot.

"Moulin Rouge" was released worldwide by Twentieth Century Fox, a unit of Rupert Murdoch's Fox Entertainment Group Inc. ***Reuters***

Ron Howard wins directors' award for 'Beautiful Mind'

By Bob Tourtellotte

LOS ANGELES—The Directors Guild of America handed former child TV star Ron Howard its award for best film director of 2001 for the psychological drama "A Beautiful Mind" as the countdown to Hollywood's highest film honors, the Oscars, continued here on Saturday.

With two weeks to go ahead of the Oscars, which will be given out by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on March 24, Howard nabbed the best director award from the directors guild, which establishes him as the front-runner to nab the Oscar for best director this year.

Honor

Since 1949, when the Directors Guild of America first gave out an honor for top film director, all but five winners of best director of a movie have gone on to claim the Oscar.

More important is the Oscar winner for best director almost always sees his film claim the Academy Award for best motion picture. So Howard and "Beautiful Mind," in which Russell Crowe portrays genius mathematician John Forbes Nash Jr. through a lifelong struggle with schizophrenia, are now the front-runners for the best picture Oscar.

Or, so it seems.

This year, the Oscar race has been wide open, and another of this year's nominees for best film, "Moulin Rouge," claimed Hollywood's producer guild award last week for this year's top motion picture.

Other nominees

Moreover, critics awards have been split between "Mind," "Rouge" and the three other nominees for best picture "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring," "Gosford Park" and "In the Bedroom."

Next up on the Oscar watch is Sunday's Screen Actors Guild awards, which will honor motion picture actors and actresses.

Highlighting this year's Oscar race was last year's DGA winner, Ang Lee, who claimed the award for "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" only to see Steven Soderbergh win the Oscar for "Traffic" and "Gladiator" take home the Oscar for best motion picture.

HOWARD. Oscar frontrunner.

"One last piece of advice," Lee offered before opening the envelope to reveal this year's winner, " don't get overconfident at the Oscars."

Howard, a lifelong member of Hollywood's "A" list, child television star and teen sensation on 1970s hit sitcom "Happy Days," said he was a little surprised at claiming best honors among a wide open field here at the DGA awards.

"I didn't think I was going to win, so I didn't prepare a speech," Howard said.

Tough selection

He then acknowledged his competition—Baz Luhrmann for "Moulin Rouge," Peter Jackson for "Rings," Ridley Scott for action film "Black Hawk Down" and Christopher Nolan for independent hit "Memento"—and said "it was a tough selection."

Earlier in the evening, Howard paid tribute to the rest of the people who worked on the story that attempts to give viewers a glimpse inside a schizophrenic's mind.

He thanked his business partner and producer, Brian Grazer, writer Akiva Goldsman and co-star Jennifer Connelly and Crowe, whom he singled out for his work playing Nobel Laureate Nash.

"The effectiveness of 'Beautiful Mind' cannot be separated from the effectiveness and power of Russell Crowe's performance," Howard said.

Elsewhere among the top award winners at the DGA's ceremony on Saturday were Frank Pierson, who was named best director for a made for television movie for HBO's "Conspiracy."

Alan Ball was named best director of a television drama for HBO's "Six Feet Under," and Todd Holland claimed the honor of best director for a television comedy series for "Malcolm in the Middle." ***Reuters***

Need an Oscar . . . From page G1

Aside from the stars yukking it up, some serious questions were asked about Oscar campaigns waged by movie studios.

In particular, "Beautiful Mind" director Ron Howard was asked about published reports concerning negative comments about John Nash, the Nobel Laureate mathematician whose battle with schizophrenia is at the center of the movie.

The reports have concerned executives at "Beautiful Mind" distributor Universal Studios who believe a rival studio is spreading rumors about Nash that would cause Academy voters to exclude "Beautiful Mind" from their best motion picture ballots.

"For anyone to try to distort behaviors reported to have occurred at the absolute height of his delusions—in the midst of a hellish, 35-year-period of schizophrenia—is not doing the world, John Nash, or themselves any kind of service," Howard said. "I have no respect for that, and to the extent that I think any of that occurred, I take it personally."

Still, most of the lunch was reserved for small talk and cutting up, which wasn't lost on Smith. During the "class picture," he was pumping his fist in the air, giving high fives and rooting on the other nominees. ***Reuters***

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MAR 16 TO MAR 22

CH	7	23	5	9	11	25	29	31
	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:00 Mary D' Potter 9:00 Da Pilya en Da Pilot 10:00 Kakasa Ka Ba? 10:30 Sapul Kayo Dyan 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Final Drive 6:30 Auto Review 7:00 Barcelona Battle of the Gold Medalists 9:00 Fox News 10:00 The Working President 11:00 Auto Focus 12:00 Fox News	6:30 Wing Commander 7:00 Sailormoon Super S 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Celebrity Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *Jesus (Part I)*	5:30 Pokemon 6:00 Imbestigador 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:00 Pinoy Blockbuster 11:00 Master Showman Presents	6:00 Star Trek 7:00 Special Unit II 8:00 Strange World 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *Where The Heart Is* 11:00 PGMA	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 IBC Elorde	6:00 Digital Tour 6:30 G2 Living 7:00 Explorer 7:30 Early Edition 8:30 Gilmore Girls 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 12:00 MYX Sampler	3:00 Q Show Case 7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Kalotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 El Coming Attractions 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 TV Men 9:00 FYE! *K-1 Kickboxing Finals* 9:30 FYE! *Men's Health Weekend* 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut *Reese Witherspoon*
	5:30 Sharon 7:00 Digimon 7:30 Wansapanataym 9:00 Home Along Da Riles 9:30 ABS-CBN Presents 11:30 Off The Record 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 Fox News 8:00 Street Legal 9:00 NBA 11:00 Business & Leisure 12:00 Fox News	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Price is Right 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 The Big Night *Golden Globe Awards 2002 (Part II)* 11:00 Star Trek	5:30 Partners Mel and Jay 7:00 KI 8:00 Daddy Di Do Du 9:00 Sunday Night Box Office 11:00 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Entertainment This Weekend 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Match TV 9:00 Sunday's Big Event *Hollywood's Magic Night* 11:00 Ugnayan	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Sinemaks 11:30 El Shaddai	6:00 Starship Troopers 6:30 Rugrats 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Futurama 8:00 Bette 8:30 Veronica's Closet 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 Murder in Small town X 10:30 Twilight Zone 11:00 News Central	5:00 Quartermaster Window Shop 7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night Movies 11:00 Bikini Open	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 El Coming Attractions 7:00 El Special *Bathing Brooke: The Making of Brooke Burke's 2002 Calendar* 8:00 Movie Men 9:00 El Special *Golden Globes Post Show*
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 8:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 8:30 Game K N B? 9:00 FPJ Action Cinema 10:30 Headlines 11:00 The Correspondents	6:00 Fox News 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Fox News 10:30 Unlimited Diving 11:00 Fox News	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 F 7:00 Mahha Go Go Go 7:30 Wheel Of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 Poltergeist: The Legacy 9:30 Trabaho Lang 10:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Sana ay Ikaw Na Nga 7:00 Hunter X Hunter 7:30 Dragonball Z 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 GMA's Best 10:30 Front Page 11:00 I-Witness	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Becker 7:30 Ariiss 8:00 World's Most Amazing Videos 9:00 The X-Files 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment Tonight 11:00 Sex & The City	5:30 Viva Music Channel 6:30 Viva Box Office 9:00 The Weakest Link 10:00 Carita de Angel 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 IBC News	5:00 Beat UK 6:30 Jenny Jones 7:30 Hidden Camera 8:00 Dark Angel 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Points of View 11:30 Travel Time	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Kalotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan 10:00 Q Showcase	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 El News Daily 7:00 In Focus 8:00 Mysteries & Scandals *Bette Davis* 8:30 Search Party 9:00 Fashion Emergency 9:30 El News Daily 10:00 60 Minutes 11:00 Wild On *High Seas*
	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Pangako sa 'Yo 7:30 Sa Puso Ko, Iingatan Ka 8:00 Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan 8:30 Game K N B? 9:00 Oka Tokat 9:30 Attagirl 10:30 Headlines 11:00 Pinoi	4:00 PBL 6:00 Fox News 8:00 Tele-Dyaryo 10:00 Pulsong Masa 11:00 Fox News	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 Dragon League 7:00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Family Feud 8:30 E.R. 9:30 Urban Doktor 10:00 The Big News	6:00 Saksi 6:30 Sana ay Ikaw Na Nga 7:00 Hunter X Hunter 7:30 Dragonball Z 8:00 Ikaw Lang Ang Mamahalin 8:30 Monica Brava 9:00 Kool Ka Lang 10:30 Front Page 11:00 The Probe Team	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Sin Ti 6:30 Real TV 7:00 Ed 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 The Practice 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Entertainment Tonight 11:30 The Extremist	8:00 Habang May Buhay 9:00 The Weakest Link 10:00 Carita de Angel 10:30 Por Un Beso 11:00 IBC News	5:30 Storytellers 6:30 Jenny Jones 7:30 Popular 8:30 The Others 9:30 Just Shoot Me 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 MYX Sampler	4:30 Quartermaster 6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Kalotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan (Live)	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 El News Daily 7:00 Celebrity Profile *Jennifer Tilly* 8:00 El True Hollywood Story 9:00 Celebrity Homes 9:30 El News Daily 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut *Shania Twain*
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ALBUM REVIEWS

Hotdogs anthems, new Alanis Morissette songs showcased

"HANDS CLEAN." Catchy tunes.

"BANDANG PINOY." Clever lyrics.

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

Bandang Pinoy
Hotdogs
BMG Records

THE album has a bunch of cover songs done live which live up to your expectations. It's a tribute album worth listening to.

Rare feat

Gathering good bands in one album is a rare feat. The Eraserheads, Parokya ni Edgar, Barbie's Cradle, True Faith and Color It Red make each song sound new but keep the basics intact. The Hotdogs defined Pinoy music in the '70s. Without them, OPM music as we know it wouldn't be the same. They spearheaded the Manila sound. Bands still play it in live gigs.

Most of the songs here have clever lyrics and good recall. They also stick to the concerns of the youth (gimmick, courtship, *porma*, first love, relationships).

"Pers Lab" is cheesy and *baduy*, but then again falling at love can make you *baduy* sometimes.

Parokya ni Edgar suits "Beh Bote Nga." It's rugged, rough but not offensive. Smart-alecky but still positive and good.

Classy rendition

Parokya's classy rendition of "Manila" is a winner.

"O Lumapit Ka" By Aquarella is a classic. The translation of some words into French gives it a sexy twist.

"Langit" by Barbi's Cradle is sweet without being overbearing. It has the right amount of *kilig* factor.

This album is a classic!

Hands Clean
Alanis Morissette
Warner Music

Alanis Morissette's new album is just as catchy as her classic favorites "You Oughta Know," "Ironic" and "Hand in My Pocket." The carrier single "Hands Clean" examines a past relationship and how its effect lingers. It's cautious but courageous, too. The lyrics seem like a virtual dialogue between two people.

Alanis simply responds to her present situation while her ex-boyfriend speaks from the "past." It's as if the couple is threshing out their excess baggage.

Self-affirmations

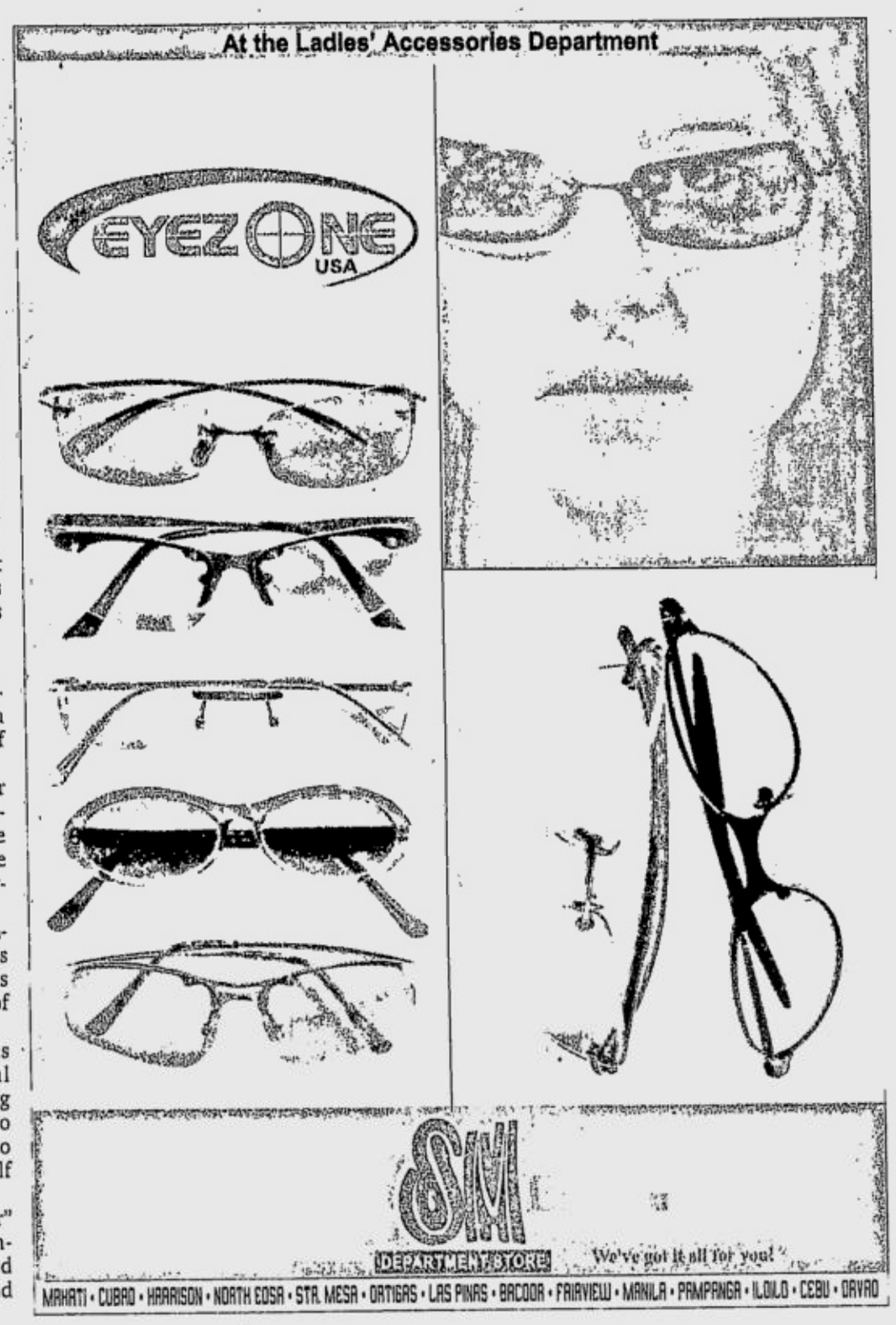
"So Unsexy" and "Precious Illusions" are self-affirmations. There's a fearless honesty and a total lack of censorship in these ditties.

"Narcissus" and "A Man" allow her to express her humor, sarcasm, humanness and frustration. They are done in the mold of "Ironic" because Alanis unapologetically criticizes herself.

"That Particular Time" and "Surrendering" try to balance the mysterious connection between men and women as they express an unconditional view of love.

"Utopia" is free-flowing. Alanis tries to communicate a personal message but instead ends up giving a global one. It's about wanting to have a map in life, then deciding to throw it away and see what life itself has to offer.

And "21 Things I Want In a Lover" challenges men and women to embrace each other's differences and similarities regardless of religion and race.



Zsa Zsa Padilla takes a break from show biz

By Edmund L. Sicam

PADILLA. Humbling experience.

'AT the end of the month, singer Zsa Zsa Padilla who recently released a VCD of her Mandarin Orinetal concert, will be taking a much-needed rest and vacation in the United States. Zsa Zsa denies that she has cancer, nor does she require surgery, nor is her life in danger. She just needs to rest her voice, that's all. "*Napapagod pa*, that's my problem. *Ang bilis mapagod*!" she laments.

Spaced out

Her last public performance was in Martin Nievera's Crossover tour last month, in which she did very well. Zsa Zsa reveals that usually, she cannot push her voice past two songs. "In Martin's concert, my numbers were spaced out, so I had time to rest my voice. That's why I can't do a concert, my voice doesn't have the stamina," she states. Zsa Zsa shares that at present, it is hit and miss when it comes to her performances. "I wasn't that good in Cebu," she admits.

During the Gary Valenciano-Ryan Cayabyab show at the Fort, Zsa Zsa, who was merely a member of the audience then, was asked to come on stage and do a duet with Gary. Since Gary is a close friend, she couldn't refuse. They sang "Used to Be," which came out very well. Zsa Zsa noticed that the song was played a note lower than usual. This was probably done so as not to put too much stress on her vocal chords.

Zsa Zsa shares her experience in recording a song for Gary's "Duets" album. "It was so difficult! But Gary is my best friend, I have to do this!" she told herself as she cried and cried on the way to the recording. She was still very emotional about having to go on leave. "Dolphy was hugging me," Zsa Zsa says. She had difficulty reaching the notes. "*Ang hirap-hirap*! I know on a good day, I could just record it in five minutes, but now I couldn't do it. Another humbling experience," she recalls.

Duets

So they adjusted the key and according to the producers, the song came out well. Zsa Zsa says it was fortunate that Gary was not in the studio. With all the advanced technology available today, duets are no longer recorded with both artists in the studio at the same time. "I was the first to record. It's a good thing Gary was not in the studio because otherwise, I would have cried," relates Zsa Zsa.

She was also getting very stressed out from all the work she had to do. She had her soap opera, which required her to have about three crying scenes per episode. Her problem was, everytime she cried, she would lose her voice, which would compound the problem even more. And she was beginning to internalize the emotions on the soap opera too much.

"Even if you're just acting, your mind knows it but your body doesn't. Your body still reacts to the stress that you're undergoing," she observes.

Personal problems

Her problem has been aggravated by events in the past few months. "Last year was really very stressful for us and we're still going through a lot of personal problems now," she intimates. Zsa Zsa says it was her family who encouraged her to take this vacation. "Just take a break from it all." they told her.

Before she could finally decide to go on this trip, she had to tie up the loose ends. She had to inform her two television shows about her decision to take a leave. It was easier to ask permission from "ASAP," her Sunday noontime variety show. It was a bit more complicated informing her soap opera about her plans. "*Kasi* they have to write it into the story. '*Tsaka, babalik ka pa ba? Paano kung hindi na*?" Her absence affects the way the story will unfold in the next month or so, but she was able to fix all that. ***(To be concluded)***

Your favorite stars' worst performances

FOR film buffs, the first quarter of the year is an exciting time to assess their cinematic taste, or lack of it. Right around this time, show biz denizens and wanna-be's are agog at the dime-a-dozen film awards given left and right that honor the best, and in the case of the Golden Raspberry Awards, the worst, that the entertainment industry can offer.

The most coveted are, of course, the Academy Awards, or the Oscars. But if we have groups that honor excellence, there are also those that *dis*honor the worst achievements in film.

Write us: Philippine Daily Inquirer, Saturday Special section, Showbiz Q&A, Chino Roces Ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo sts., Makati City.

This week's Q and A:

"You recently featured a piece on Sylvester Stallone being adjudged the "Worst Actor of the Century" by the Golden Raspberry Awards. Are the Razzies an annual event? Who is Sly's female counterpart, and who are some of the `awards' previous winners?" – ***Lisa Santos, Proj. 4, QC***

Yes, the Razzies started giving citations in 1980 ("...not meant as a slap on the face. It's a banana peel on the floor," says Razzie head

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

John Wilson). Boasting of 500 voting members, 400 more than the Golden Globes, it is now on its 22nd year and scheduled to *dis*honor (with a $4.29-worth gold spray-painted raspberry iced-tea jar atop a mangled Super-eight film reel) last year's "*cream of the crap*" a day before Oscar winners are announced on the 24th.

Record-breaking feat

Stallone's record-breaking feat comes with nine wins in 29 nominations! Not content with that, he is again in the running in the Supporting Actor category for "Driven."

While Nicole Kidman has been winning accolades for her performances, Penelope Cruz is up for the Razzies' 'Worst Actress' award this year for three movies

STALLONE. Nine wins in 29 nominations.

Madonna may have won a Golden Globe for her performance in "Evita," but she is Razzie's "Worst Actress of the Century" (she also won last year for "The Next Best Thing").

John Travolta's "Battlefield Earth" (last year, he won "Worst Actor" with wife Kelly Preston as "Worst Supporting Actress," truly a domestic sharing—how sweet!) is tied with Elizabeth Berkley's "Showgirls" as its all-time worst, winning in seven out of nine categories.

While Nicole Kidman has been winning accolades for her performances in "Moulin Rouge" and "The Others," Penelope Cruz is up for the group's "Worst Actress" award this year for *three* (!) movies: "Vanilla Sky," "Blow," and "Capt. Corelli's Mandolin." Eat your heart out, Nicole!

Other nominees this year: Ben Affleck ("Pearl Harbor"); three-time winner Kevin Costner ("3,000 Miles to Graceland"); Keanu Reeves ("Hardball," "Sweet November"); John Travolta ("Domestic Disturbance," "Swordfish") and Tom Green ("Freddie Got Fingered").

The ladies: Mariah Carey ("Glitter"); Angelina Jolie ("Original Sin," "Lara Croft"); Jennifer Lopez ("Angel Eyes"); Charlize Theron ("Sweet November") and Cruz.

Past winners and nominees

Past winners and nominees: Brooke Shields ("Blue Lagoon"); Bo Derek ("Tarzan The Ape Man"; Faye Dunaway ("Mommie Dearest"); Lawrence Olivier ("Inchon"); Pia Zadora ("Butterfly"); Luciano Pavarotti ("Yes, Giorgio!"); Barbra Streisand ("Yentl"); Bill Cosby ("Leonard, Part 6"); Liza Minnelli ("Arthur 2"); Donald Trump ("Ghosts Can't Do It");

Burt Reynolds ("Cop and A Half"); Sharon Stone ("The Specialist"); Dennis Hopper ("Waterworld"); Demi Moore ("Striptease"); Marlon Brando ("Island of Dr. Moreau"); O.J. Simpson ("Naked Gun 33 1/3"); Bruce Willis ("Armageddon"); Tom Cruise ("Cocktail"); The Spice Girls ("Spice World");

Julia Roberts ("Mary Reilly"); Sandra Bullock ("Demolition Man"); Robert Redford ("Indecent Proposal"); Prince ("Under the Cherry Moon"); Jack Nicholson ("Man Trouble"); Bette Midler ("Stella"); Michael Douglas ("Basic Instinct");

Sean Connery and Ralph Fiennes ("The Avengers"); George C. Scott ("Exorcist 3"); Uma Thurman ("Even Cowgirls Get the Blues"); Dennis Rodman ("Double Team"); Will Smith ("Wild, Wild West"); Ryan Philippe ("54"); Arnold Schwarzenegger ("Last Action Hero"), among others. Whew! Quite a *distinguished* company, huh?

Bemoustached character

It is interesting to note that Brooke Shields (due to her bemoustached character in "Sahara") was nominated for "Worst Supporting *Actor*," while Dom de Luise was "Worst Supporting *Actress*" nominee for "Haunted Honeymoon." Sean Young won "Worst Actress" *and* "Worst Supporting Actress" for playing twins in "A Kiss Before Dying."

For this year's derby, Mariah Carey was nominated for the "Worst Screen Couple" category for her ever-prominent *cleavage* in "Glitter," *and* Tom Green 'and any animal he abuses' in "Freddy Got Fingered."

Wilson said 96.7 percent of the time in the last 20 years, actual winners were *not* expected to attend. The only famous "winner" to ever appear and who took home the prototype trophy after a standing ovation was a good-natured Paul Verhoeven (director of "Showgirls," "Basic Instinct," "Robocop") for his dance-and-strip-athon junkie.

Robert Conrad, star of the '60s TV series, "The Wild, Wild West," so loathed the Will Smith's 1999 movie version that he attended the awards rites so he could publicly rip it.

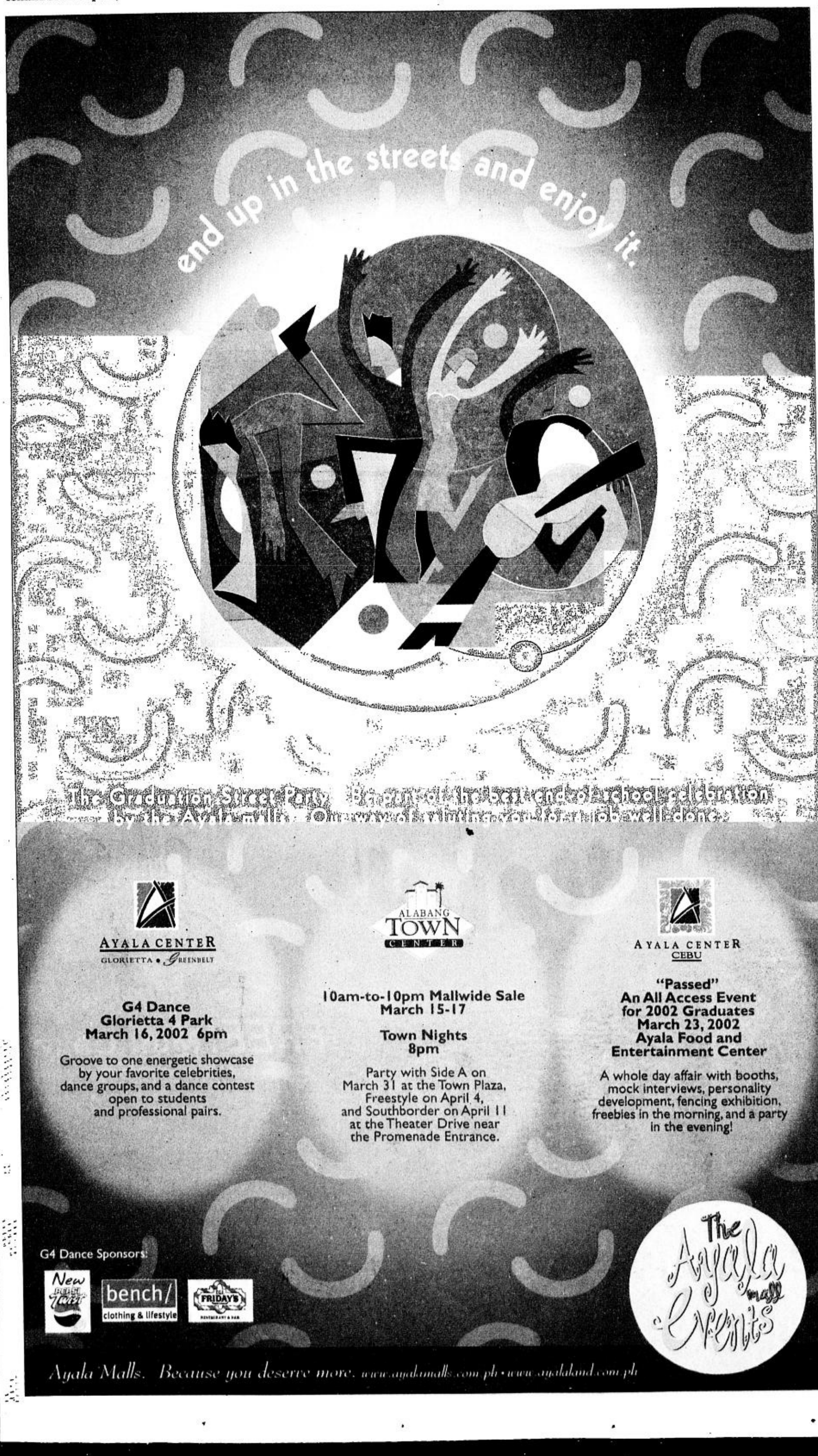
Tom Green, who is this year's favorite to win the top plum, gushes, "I'm very proud and honored to be nominated for these awards because I've never won an award before. I hope there's an actual trophy because I've already dusted off my mantel. I guess dreams can come true!"

When asked about their respective nominations, both Stallone and Mariah Carey chose not to comment!

Trivia

More movies are produced in India than in Hollywood each year. India releases about 800 movies annually, about twice the output of Hollywood last year. The Philippines released about 90 movies.

(Next week: The Oscars!)



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Our Favorite Teachers

By Nico Miguel N. Garcia, Paref-Southridge School; Stanly Galo C. Sy, Xavier School; Louella E. Yu, Immaculate Conception Academy; Andrew Cie, Brent International School; Monica Lualhati, St. Benedict School, Alabang; Stephanie C. Ferrer, St. Joseph's College; Alexis Marquez Dy, Immaculate Conception Academy; and Anna Elvira S. Arcellana, Miriam College Grade School

IT'S graduation time once more for campuses all over the country. There will be new schools, new friends and new challenges. We'll surely miss our old friends and old teachers.

But who are those teachers we will miss the most: JI correspondents investigate: "What is your favorite teacher like?"

Illustration by STEPH BRAVO

STUDENT'S PET. Stella Fortu hangs out with favorite teacher Pia Luque at the Miriam College gym.

She's approachable, friendly and warm.

"My favorite teacher, Mr. Dennis Hernandez, ... likes to cheer us up by telling jokes. If you need help, you can just go to him and he is always willing to help you. He is like a friend to us, someone we can tell secrets to.—***Darwin Salcedo***, *Grade 5, St. Benedict School*

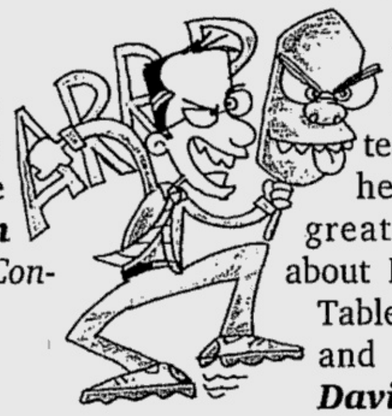
"I like Ms Donna Kelly because she is like a mommy to me. When my mama is not here, she remembers to be extra special to me." —***Gabriel C. Ibasco***, *Kindergarten, Brent International School*

"My favorite teacher is Ms Evelyn Salandanan. I love the way she speaks. I can tell her my secrets and she never spills them to others. She advises me when I have problems."—***Jessica dela Cruz***, *Grade 6, St. Joseph's College*

"When someone's absent, Ms Lorraine Delos Santos makes sure the student who was absent the previous day knows and understands the lesson. Plus, she gives the members of the class her cellphone number so we can communicate." —***Megan Chua***, *Grade 5, Immaculate Conception Academy*

He has a good sense of humor.

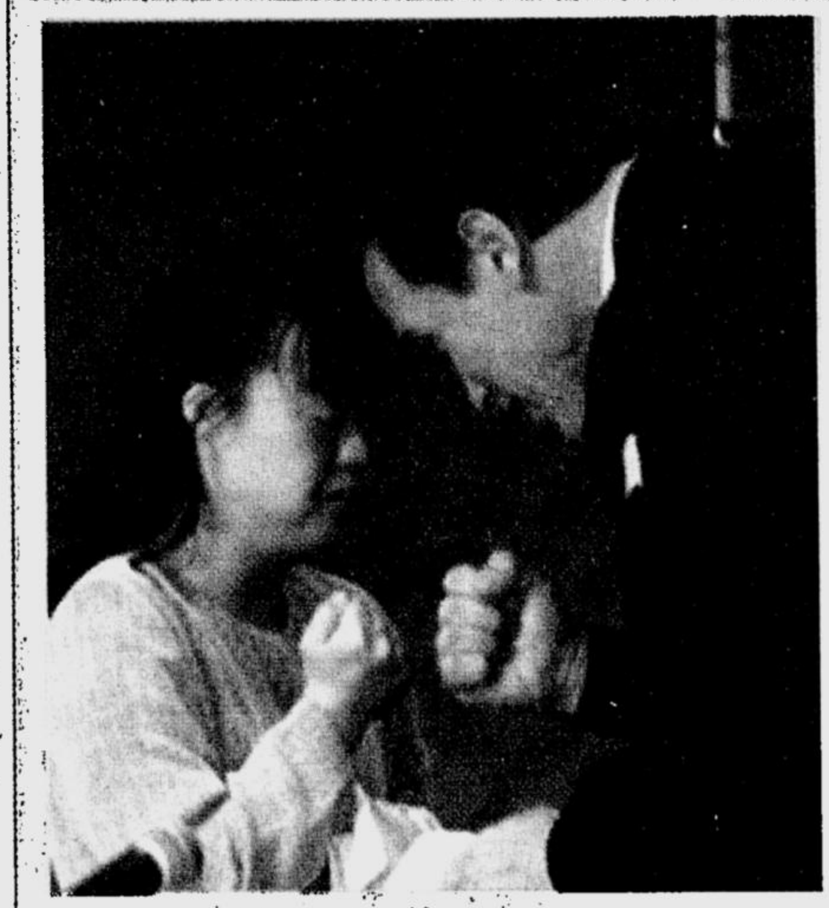
"My favorite teacher is Mr. Darwin Guerrero because he tells us jokes." —***Elijah Adamos***, *11, Xavier School*



"Mr. Rutch Regencia is my favorite teacher because he told us the greatest stories about Ketchup, Pink Table, Sea Urchins and Birchtree."—***David Keith S. de Padua***, *Grade 5, Southridge School*

"Mr. Randy Esparagoza is my favorite teacher because he tells

Our /p.2



Arnold and Friend

AMERICAN film actor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Japanese girl Sachiko Yuyama greet each other during a press conference opened by Schwarzenegger. The film star is in Tokyo to attend the Japan premiere of his latest film, "Collateral Damage." Being a supporter of special children, Schwarzenegger also promoted a Japanese documentary movie featuring disabled youngsters' American home stay experience. ***AP***

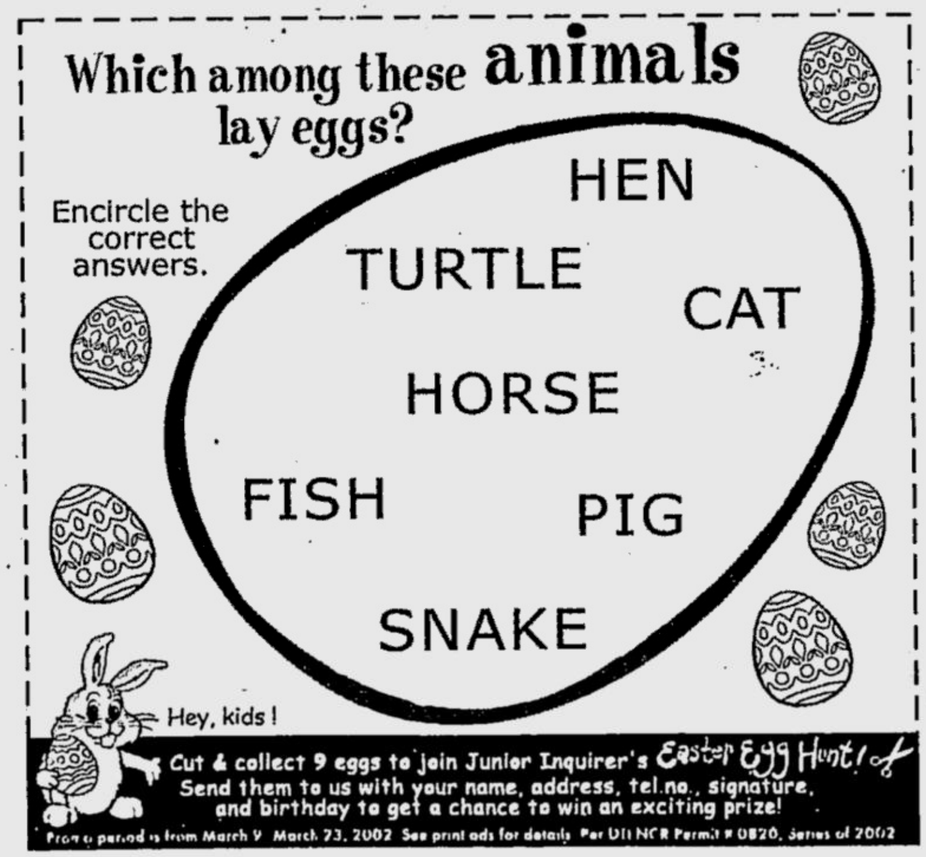
World Scope

Roman Eggs-tacy

WHEN in Rome, do as the eggs do. Sit around some Spanish steps and be admired. Workers put the finishing touches on some 3,000 Easter eggs placed along the Spanish Steps in Rome. The chocolate eggs were displayed to promote the upcoming Euro-chocolate fair. ***Reuters***

Piercing the Sky

THE SPACE shuttle Columbia flies into a cloud bank after liftoff at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida on Mar. 1. Columbia is flying to the Hubble Space Telescope to check and maintain the telescope. ***AP***



Our Favorite Teacher

(from page 1)

us stories. He dismisses us early. He was able to scare me. He did a good job with our class presentation for Mother's Day. We made a Yoyoy Villame song into a song, dance, comedy number. He's a new teacher but he's good already." ***—Carlos Sebastian Calub,*** *Grade 5, Southridge School*

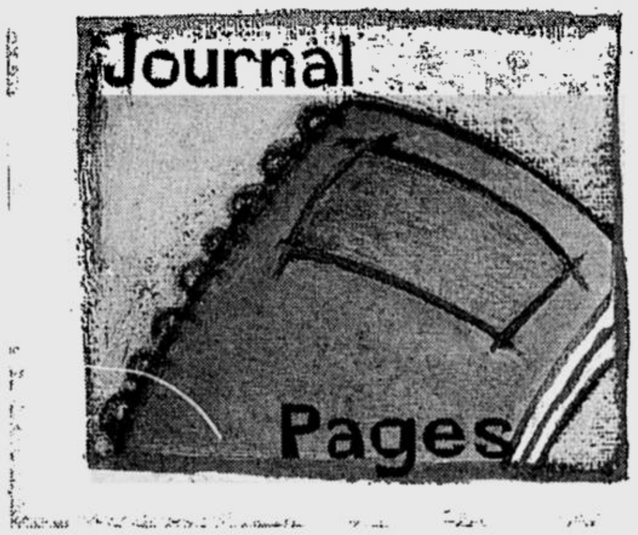
She is very considerate.

"My favorite teacher is Mr. Nestor Catbagan because when I was failing on the first five weeks of the quarter, he gave me a chance to pass." ***—Christian Santiago,*** *11, Grade 5, Southridge School*

"Ms Joyce Ruberto is my English Language teacher. She is my favorite because she explains the things we are learning very carefully." ***—Zara Ching,*** *Grade 4, Gideon Academy*

"My favorite teacher is Ms Lilia Soriano. When I say an answer, even though it isn't the precise answer, she accepts it. She's always considerate." ***—Reyna B. Monica,*** *Grade 6, St. Joseph's College*

Our /p.4



Lila's Legacy

By Anna Tan
Miriam College Grade School
Quezon City

I AM proud to say that I belong to Grade 6-Lila! This is an amazing class. I couldn't have spent my entire Grade 6 year better than with classmates whom I love. We have won so many contests together.

One of them is the Peace Rally, where we won the top prize! Everyone worked hard, everyone was united, and everyone believed in each other. I was so proud when the judges announced that our section won First Place!

The next contest was the Choralfest. We worked really hard on this one. We practiced during all the free time we had. In the end, all our hard work paid off when we won "Best in Delivery"!

During the intramurals, we faced section Kayumanggi in volleyball. We knew they were good. That didn't kill our spirit, and confidence. But Kayumanggi beat us. Although we felt a bit bad, we accepted defeat. Actually, it didn't feel like losing at all. We were happy! We went back to the classroom, and celebrated!

In this year's cheering competition, we threw ourselves into choreographing the dance, thinking of the chants and making the props. On competition day, we cheered from our hearts, we danced like it was the end of the world. We gave our best. We showed the other sections that we were together as a class; and we were there for each other.

When the judges were ready to announce the winners, I crossed my fingers and prayed that we would win.

"Second place goes to... 6-LILA!" the judge boomed over the microphone. We jumped for joy!. We won, just like I wished!

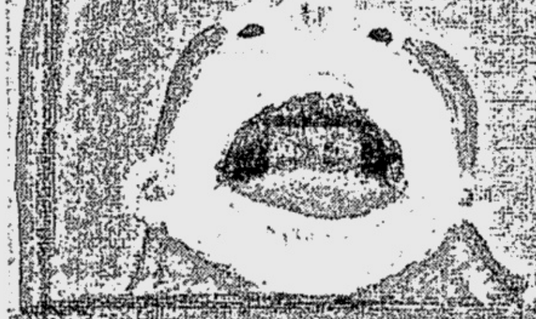
After all of my section's victories, after all of the times we were there for each other, I wouldn't want to part from my dear classmates. I love them. I love the way we never let each other down. I love the way we bring laughter to each other's hearts. I love the way we stood by each other like sisters. I will never forget my section.

So, 6-Lila, the school year has ended. I hope that we do not forget each other, and all the times we've spent together. I love you!

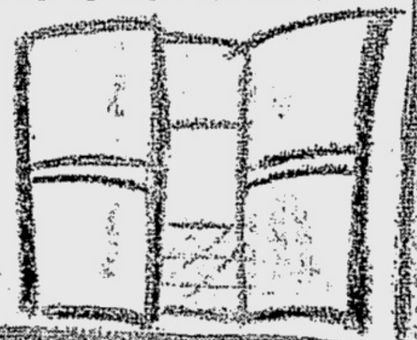
Sound Familiar ?

Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers



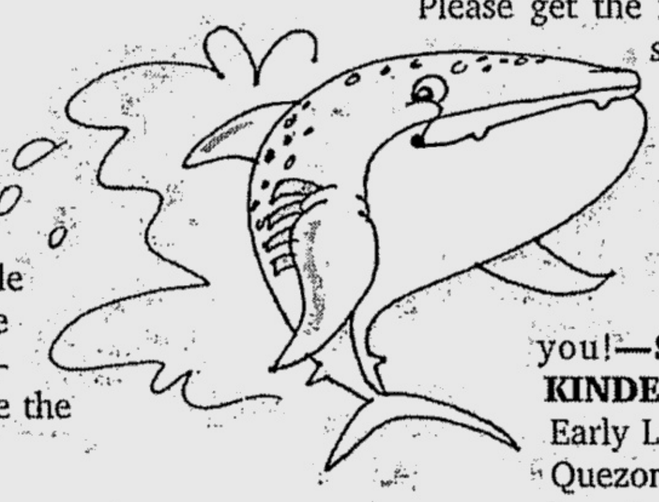
You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!



Open Letter

Dear Mr. Fisherman,

WE are the Kinder and Nursery Class of Teacher Tetin from Cradle of Joy. We are studying about whale sharks. They swim. They're good. They play with dolphins and people. They are the biggest fish in the world.



Please get the fishes only, not the whale sharks. Please don't slice up the whale sharks. Please do not kill the whale sharks. Don't kill the dolphins *din*. Don't kill the other sharks. Just catch the fish for eating.Thank you!—**SENIOR NURSERY/ KINDER CLASS**, Cradle of Joy, Early Learning Center, Kamuning, Quezon City

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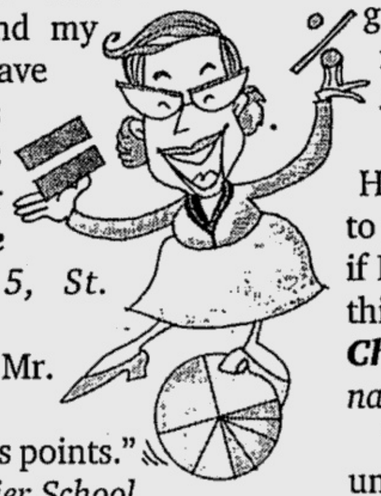
Please send your letters & contributions to: the Junior Inquirer Editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, P.O. Box 2353, Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines

Our Favorite Teacher

(from page 2)

He makes learning fun.

"I like Ms Leony Aro, our Wika teacher. She helps me understand my lessons by making us have fun during our classes with her. We sometimes have games during her class."—***Polle Valerie Macaranas***, *Grade 5, St. Benedict School*



"My favorite teacher is Mr. Edward Sy Beng because he gives us plus points."—***Ryan Young***, *11, Xavier School*

"I like Ms Rachel Paraggua because she makes math fun to do and learn. There are games, and after each problem she explains how you get the answer."—***Corinne Serrano***, *Grade 5, Immaculate Conception Academy*

"My favorite teacher is Ms Nenita Africano because she gives us bonus questions so if you get them correctly, you get plus points."—***Jeffrey Go***, *12, Xavier School*

"My favorite teacher is Ms Marita Portacion because she makes Reading interesting. She has activities like Word of the Week, where a classmate picks an unfamiliar word and shares it with the class. Then we have to use that word for the entire week."—***Eleanor Kawsek***, *Grade 5, Immaculate Conception Academy*

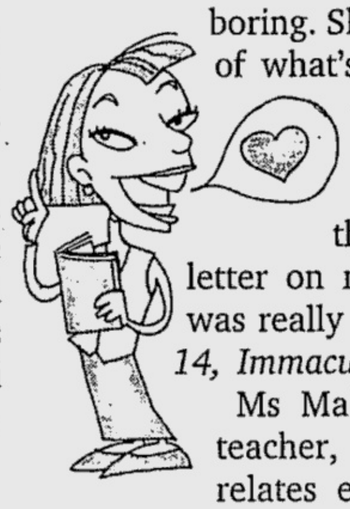
She is patient and inspiring.

"I don't have a favorite teacher but I like Ms Lorraine Delos Santos because she cares about us and she's still pretty nice even if our class gets really noisy (which happens often). She rarely gets fed up."—***Shayna Cua***, *Grade 5, Immaculate Conception Academy*

"Hmm, my favorite teacher is Ms Darby Hammond because, well, she makes me want to try harder. She knows that I can do my best if I try. She wants me to try my best for everything. Also, she is very, very nice."—***Blaine Christopher Denton***, *Grade 6, Brent International School*

"Mr. Dan Waters is funny. When you don't understand what he is talking about, he will help you understand. He challenges everyone to try his or her best. Also, he teaches us new and challenging things."—***Martin Ancel Vergara***, *Grade 6, Brent International School*

"Ms Veronica Que spends her time telling us all these cool stories and her discussions aren't boring. She always keeps us aware of what's happening in the society. She gives us small things that mean a lot to us because it comes from the heart. She gave me a letter on my Confirmation Day, it was really touching." —***Reese Lee***, *14, Immaculate Conception Academy*



Ms Maita Nojadera, my Civics teacher, was very efficient...She relates every lesson we have to her life. She's really friendly and sociable. It's easy to get along with her as teacher and a friend. She likes cheering up her students and encourages us to work harder for things we want."—***Ovette Chan***, *14, Immaculate Conception Academy*

He is smart and firm.

"My favorite is Mr. Edward Sy Beng because he is a good teacher to us and he can control the class."—***Ryan Ong***, *11, Xavier School*

"My favorite teacher is Ms Therese Pelias because she gives more info than what I ask her for." —***Jansen Ngo***, *11, Xavier School*

"My favorite teacher is Mr. Ken Tan because when I have question he never hesitates to answer it."—***Spencer Yu Galan***, *11, Xavier School*

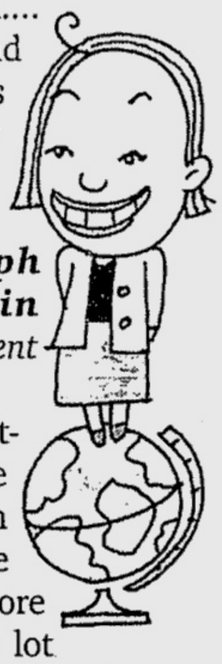
She is creative.

"Ms Pia Luque is truly the best teacher! Last week, our class posted a note on the board that said teachers are required to say a good-bye speech. While we were having a test, we wondered what she was writing on her table. Then after our test, she recited two poems: one was written by a famous writer, the other poem was written by herself dedicated to our section, 7-Kalinga. She was so sweet and thoughtful! The poem was really funny and nice."—***Stella Fortu***, *Grade 7, Miriam College Grade School*

He is all of these, and more!

"Ms Lorraine Delos Santos is my favorite teacher because she made me like Language better. She listens, really listens, to what we have to say. When our class needed some desperate planning for the Christmas party, she helped us get organized."—***Bernice Go***, *Grade 5, Immaculate Conception Academy*

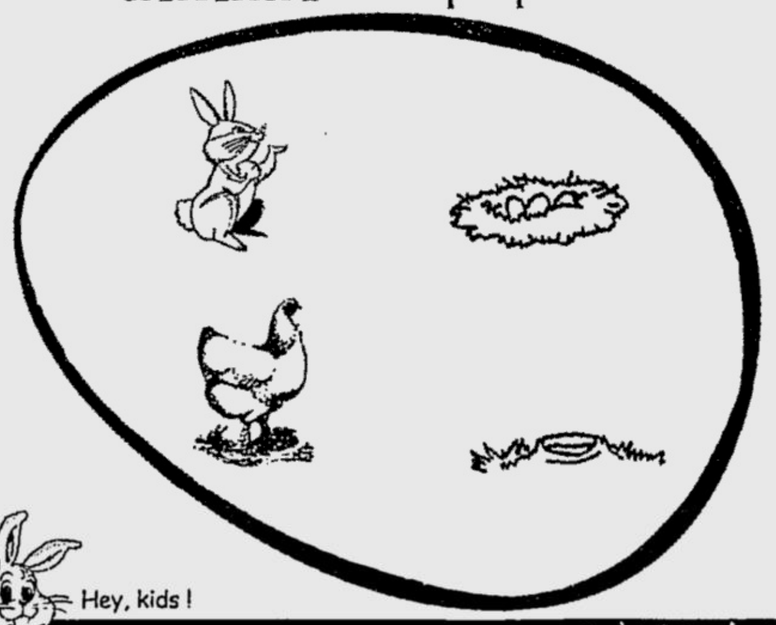
"I like Ms Darby Hammond because she doesn't give much homework.... She can make a mistake and laugh about it. Also, she gives us plenty of time to finish any project which she assigns us. She plans very fun activities to give us,"—***Roger Rudolph Maranan and Kevin Swartebroeckx***, *Grade 6, Brent International School*



Ms Evelyn Maralit is the smartest, wittiest and least boring. She knows her lesson inside out...In all my years as a student, I have never respected any teacher more than I respect her. I learned a lot from her both inside and outside the classroom because she always has thoughts to share which are really useful unlike some lessons we have in school. —***Jewelyn Chua***, *14, Immaculate Conception Academy*

Our/p.7

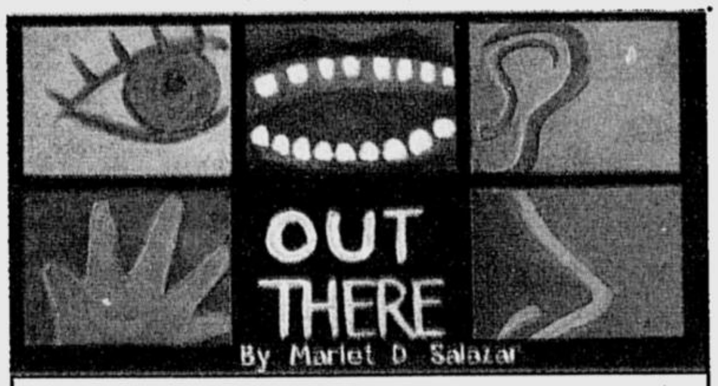
Match each animal to its proper home.



Hey, kids!

Cut & collect 9 eggs to join Junior Inquirer's Easter Egg Hunt! of
Send them to us with your name, address, tel.no., signature, and birthday to get a chance to win an exciting prize!

Promo period is from March 9 - March 23, 2002. See print ads for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0820, Series of 2002.



Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Workshops

SCIENCE CAMP. The Philippine Society of Youth and Science Clubs Inc. is inviting all interested high school students to join the 2002 National Youth Science Technology and Environmental Summer Camp on April 10-16. It will be held at the University of the Philippines campus in Quezon City. Call up 920-8174 or 920-9561 or send an email to psysc@vasia.com.

POSITIVE ART. Kids 3 years old and above are invited to join the Positivism Summer Art Workshop by E.R. Tagle starting April 6. Doodle and paint with pencil, charcoal, watercolor, pastel and mixed media. Call up Ana or Mario at 816-0904 or 0917-9726223 for important details.

CREATIVE WRITING. Pals@pages creative writers group will hold a fiction for beginners workshop on April 6. There's also a feature writing workshop on April 13. All classes will be held at the Earthlite Center, 4th floor, COD Department Store Bldg., Cubao, Quezon City. For more info, call up 417-1521 or 0919-7405199.

ALITAPTAP. Alitaptap Storytellers Club invites students, teachers, parents and storytelling enthusiasts to a two-day storytelling workshop on March 23 and 24. For details contact Charlyn at 363-2989 or send an email to alitap tapclub@yahoogroups.com

PHOTOWORKSHOP. If you like taking pictures, this workshop is for you. From April 6 to May 18, photographer Mandy Navasero will conduct a workshop on advance photography. Lectures and demo are scheduled every Saturday. Participants are required to use a 135mm or 120mm camera. For more details call up 522-1905, 522-5185 or 522-5189. Visit her studio at 1935 Dominga St., Pasay City.

Contest

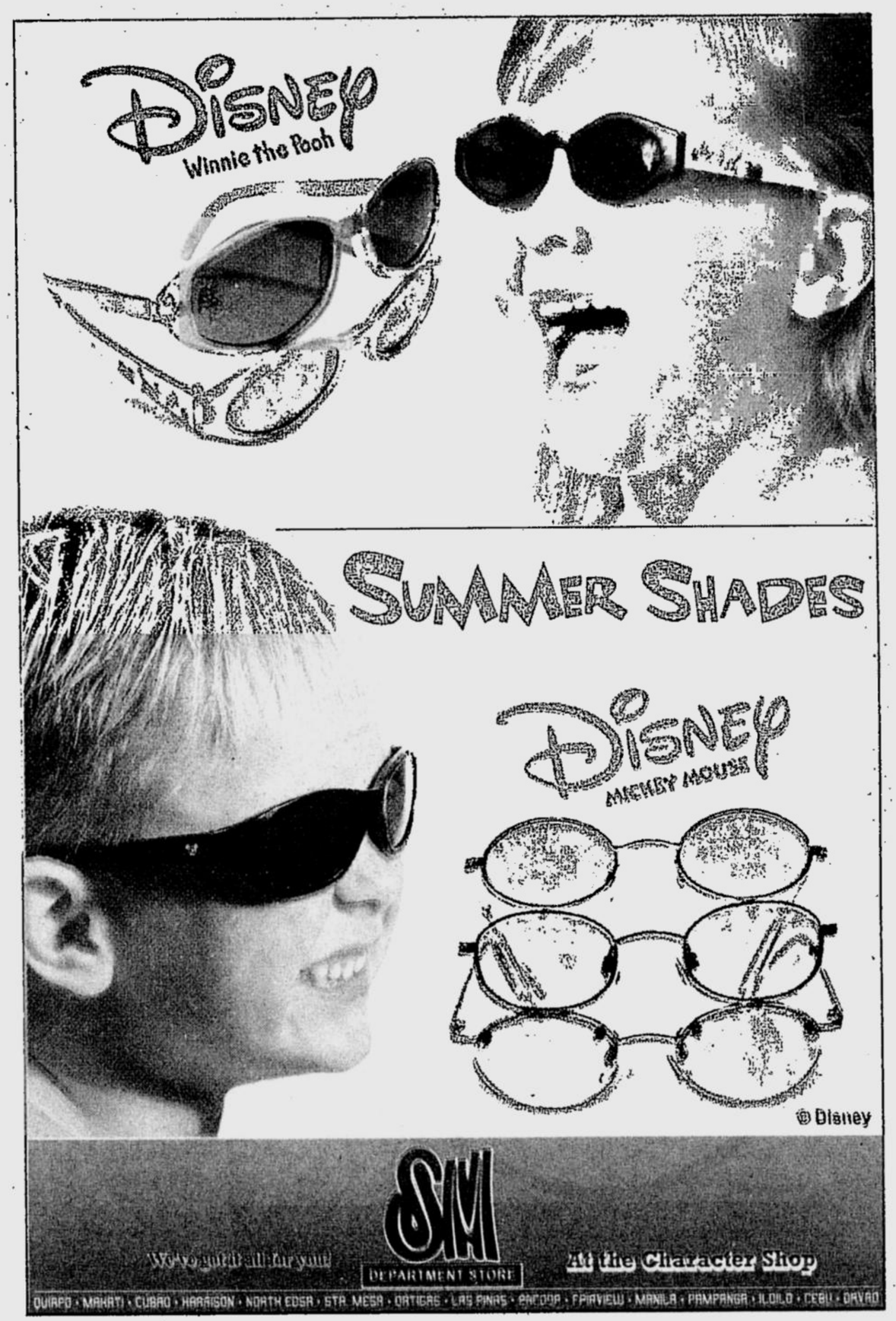
SNAIL MAIL TILT. Join the 2002 Universal Postal Union International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People. Students or non-students not more than 15 years old may submit their handwritten entries to Tirso N. Paglicawan Jr., Media and Public Affairs/Editor in Chief, The Philpost Journal Care, Office of the Postmaster General, Philpost, 1000 Manila. Deadline is on March 27. Call up 527-0074 for more important details.

Film Showing

JAPANESE FILMS. Catch various Japanese films in different venues. There will be a film showing at the Rizal Park Auditorium, T.M. Kalaw St., Manila, until tomorrow; at the Antonio Molina Hall, EPCIB Tower, H.V. dela Costa St., Makati Avenue, on March 18-20. And in celebration of the Pundaquit Festival, screenings will also be held at Casa San Miguel, Zambales on March 21-23. This is open to the public. For inquiries call up 811-6455 to 58, send an email to cstamaria@jfmo.org.ph.

Cable Picks

SEA EAGLE. On Wednesday, March 20 at 9 p.m. watch the search for the Giant Sea Eagle by two National Geographic photographers. Don't miss it on NGC's "Out There (Adventure Starts Here) with Toyota."



Art by Rita Badilla

My Mother

By Miguel S. Azarias

She helps me when I am in need,
For our neighbors, she does good deeds,
She rises up very early,
To clean the whole house merrily.

When I am about to fall
And I have no one to hear my call.
That is when my mother helps me,
She helps me with her might and glee.

She's the most important person
In this whole world I've ever known,
This is the thing I'll keep in mind,
Until I'm very old and blind.

***Miguel** is a third year high school student at Sacred Heart Academy of Novaliches. He wrote this poem as a tribute to his mother.*

A Great Father

By Lesley Anne P. Cao

You are a great father,
Kind, loving, caring and all.
You do your best to take care of us forever,
You love us better than any other.

Your greatness would not end,
We love you more than any friend.
You do your best to make us grow.
You want our grades not to be low.

The way you care is best.
Yes, we will let you rest.
You are yourself and do what you want,
You want us to grow like a plant.

For takin
We will
For being
Is your n

***Lesley** studies at UP Integrated School. She wrote this poem fo Cao who had already passed away.*

For a Friend

By Natascha O. Ackermann

For a friend who's going to share my heart.
Who knows and treasures her roles and part,
Who stays in the rain no matter what,
Show me the happiness, that I've got.

To give me my dreams and give me love.
And turn my face to the God above.
To uncover the mask on my face,
And release me from my long disgrace.

Please, my friend, reach your hand out to me,
And reflect my face for the whole world to see,
That we'll be friends till the bitter end.
And that's what I do for a friend.

***Natascha** School in P*
***Rita** is a n*

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g care of your family
thank you happily.
g a great father
nanner and none other.

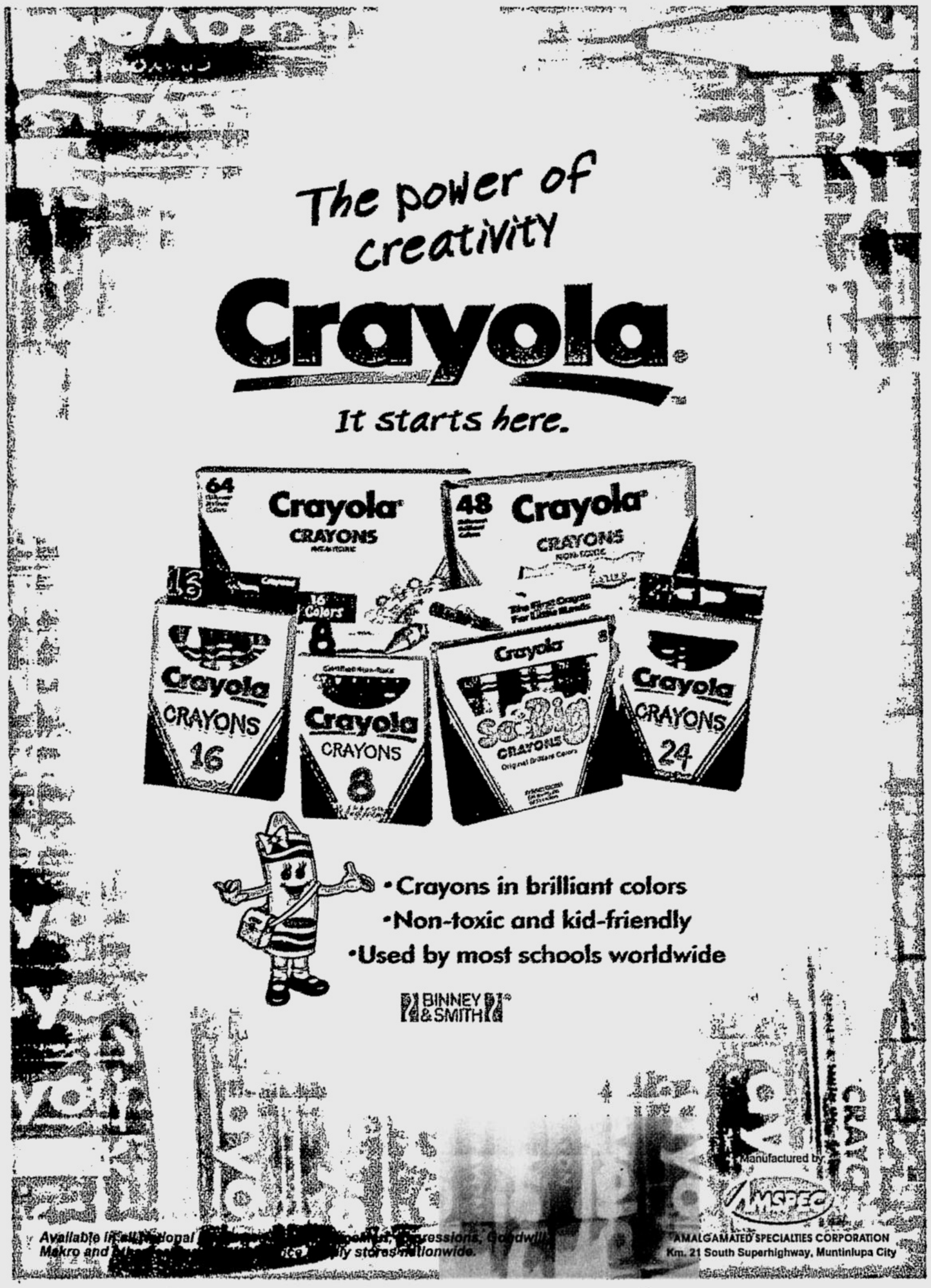
r her father, Atty. Hernando

studies at Southville International
Parañaque.
member of Ang Ilustrador ng Kabataan.

Our Favorite Teacher

(from page 4)

"It's hard to say who my favorite teacher is since I like all of them! They all have different personalities and teaching styles. There's Ms Luque who's open and concerned, Ms Sarmiento who's caring and motherly, Ms Ilagan who is fun and well-rounded and the list goes on. . .I guess I can say is: I love you all!"—***Catrina Garcia****, Grade 7, Miriam College Grade School*



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J.D. The Kangkong Kid

Give him an okra anytime, too

By Mae Astrid Tobias

KANGKONG and okra for dinner? Yuck! Not for Joseph Daniel Dantes or J.D. This 4-year-old from Covenant of Grace School just loves to eat his vegetables especially kangkong, okra and string beans.

"They're delicious," he simply says.

Don't think that J.D. is strange because like any other kid, he also enjoys eating hotdog and chicken legs.

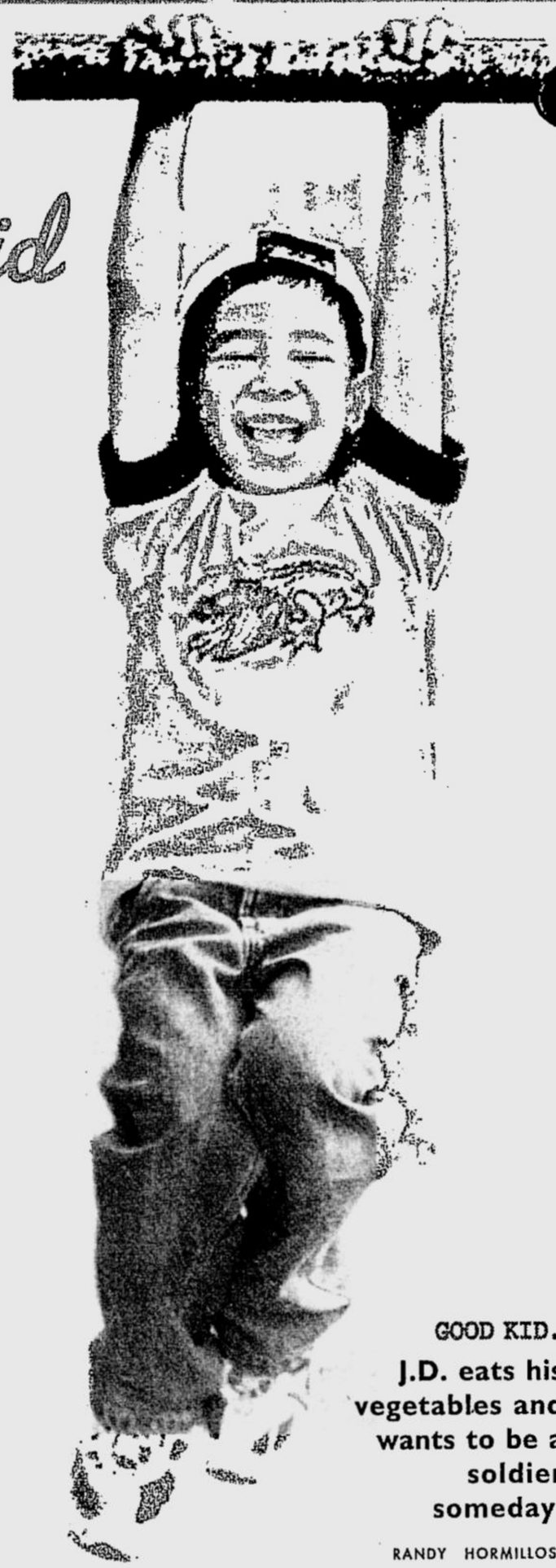
Another reason J.D. is cool is because he can speak and understand three languages: English, Filipino and Cebuano. In school, his teachers mostly speak to him in English or Filipino. But at home, he talks to his *yaya* in Cebuano because that's what she speaks.

J.D. likes going to school because his teacher, Grace, is very nice. He also likes going to school because his mother, Eva, works there as a teacher's aide. So he's with his mom the whole day. J.D. loves his family so much that he's willing to stay up past his bedtime in order to wait for his dad, who works in Makati, to come home. Sometimes he waits up until 11 p.m.

In school and at home, J.D. loves to read stories. His favorites include a "Teddy" story collection, as well as the stories of Samson ("because he's strong") and Jonah and the Whale found in the Bible. He also likes to solve puzzles, because they are pretty to look at.

He likes animals. His favorite animals include the lion, tiger, and cobra. Some of his favorite movies are also animal related, such as "A Bug's Life," "Tarzan," and "The Lion King."

When J.D. grows up, he wants to be a soldier, "to catch those that do wrong," he says. "Last year he wanted to be a pastor," says his mom.



GOOD KID. **J.D. eats his vegetables and wants to be a soldier someday.**

RANDY HORMILLOSA

R RRIFIC

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done
Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a **free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!**

Kid 'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate: _____

_____

Age: _____

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

She/he lives at _____

_____

_____

and studies at _____

_____

Her/his contact number is: _____

Sender's Name: _____

_____

Sender's Age & School: _____

_____

Sender's Address: _____

_____

Sender's Contact No. _____

_____

Eggs the same!

Two of these Easter eggs are exactly the same.

Can you spot them?

Hey, kids!

Cut & collect 9 eggs to join Junior Inquirer's Easter Egg Hunt! Send them to us with your name, address, tel.no., signature, and birthday to get a chance to win an exciting prize!

Promo period is from March 9 - March 23, 2002. See print ads for details. Pair DTI-NCR Permit # 0820, Series of 2002.

Love that Boom!

"Probe Team's" Love Añover gets a kick out of meeting the man-on-the-street

NEWS reporters hold microphones in their hands or have lapel mikes when delivering the news, right? Well, there is only one broadcast journalist in the Philippines who wields a clunky, large boom mike instead. That's kooky and funny Love Añover, one of the anchors for the award-winning news features program called "The Probe Team."

"The staff decided to come up with something new," the 26-year-old broadcast journalist says. "Something that would fit my bubbly and perky personality."

Then she laughs, "And the idea of using the boom mike came up."

The boom mike is a really large mike shaped like an overgrown hotdog bun. It's a very good mike to use when you want quality audio for TV shows and movies. Hung above a reporter's head or actors' heads, it is usually kept out of the video camera's sight.

But Love holds it in her hand while reporting her candid and news feature segments.

"Hey, that boom mike gets all the attention!" she teases. "I'm getting jealous!"

Man-on-the-Street

On "The Probe Team," Love has a segment called "Pasakalye" which features candid comments by Filipinos of all backgrounds.

"It is the voice of the masses," she says. "I get opinions from people from different walks of life like fish ball vendors, beggars, bus drivers, taxi drivers, people from markets, even professionals..."

Love says Filipinos are actually very much aware of national issues. Sadly though, she also meets people who are not well-informed about important news.

Working with "The Probe Team" has given Love different kinds of adventures. She's also met so many interesting people. Is there anything else on her list of exciting and important things to do?

"I want to do stories about the people from Africa," she says. Love wants Filipino viewers to count their blessings and realize that there are countries who are in more difficult circumstances than ours.

Indeed, Love's job as a journalist is one of the coolest of all. And for the lady with the boom mike, it's an exciting combination of fun, hard work and public service!

Maria Zobel Certeza

RANDY HORMILLOSA

"PASAKALYE."
Love's bubbly personality makes it easy for the people she interviews to speak out honestly.

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, ***YOU'LL*** *get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

I nominate _____.

He/She is _____ years old and is my _____.

Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:

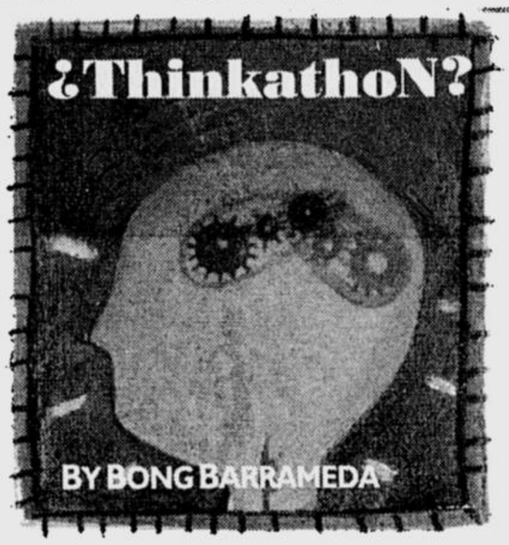
1) _____;
2) _____;
3) _____;
4) _____;
and
5) _____.

My nominee lives at _____ _____.

Give him/her a call at _____

_____

or send him/her an e-mail.



Plural Forms-2

ON TO THE SECOND (and tougher) part of our test series on the plural forms of nouns. Again, can you pick the right one (or ones) in each number?

1. series
   - series
   - serieses
   - seria

2. potato
   - potatos
   - potatoes
   - potati

3. footage
   - footage
   - footages
   - feetage

4. corps
   - corps
   - corpse
   - corpses

5. antenna (TV)
   - antennas
   - antennae
   - antenni

6. crisis
   - crisis
   - crises
   - crisises

7. furniture
   - furniture
   - furnitures
   - furtunituria

8. sheep
   - sheep
   - sheeps
   - sheepish

9. species
   - specie
   - species
   - specieses

10. symposium
    - symposiums
    - symposia
    - symposias

11. phenomenon
    - phenomenons
    - phenomena
    - phenomenas

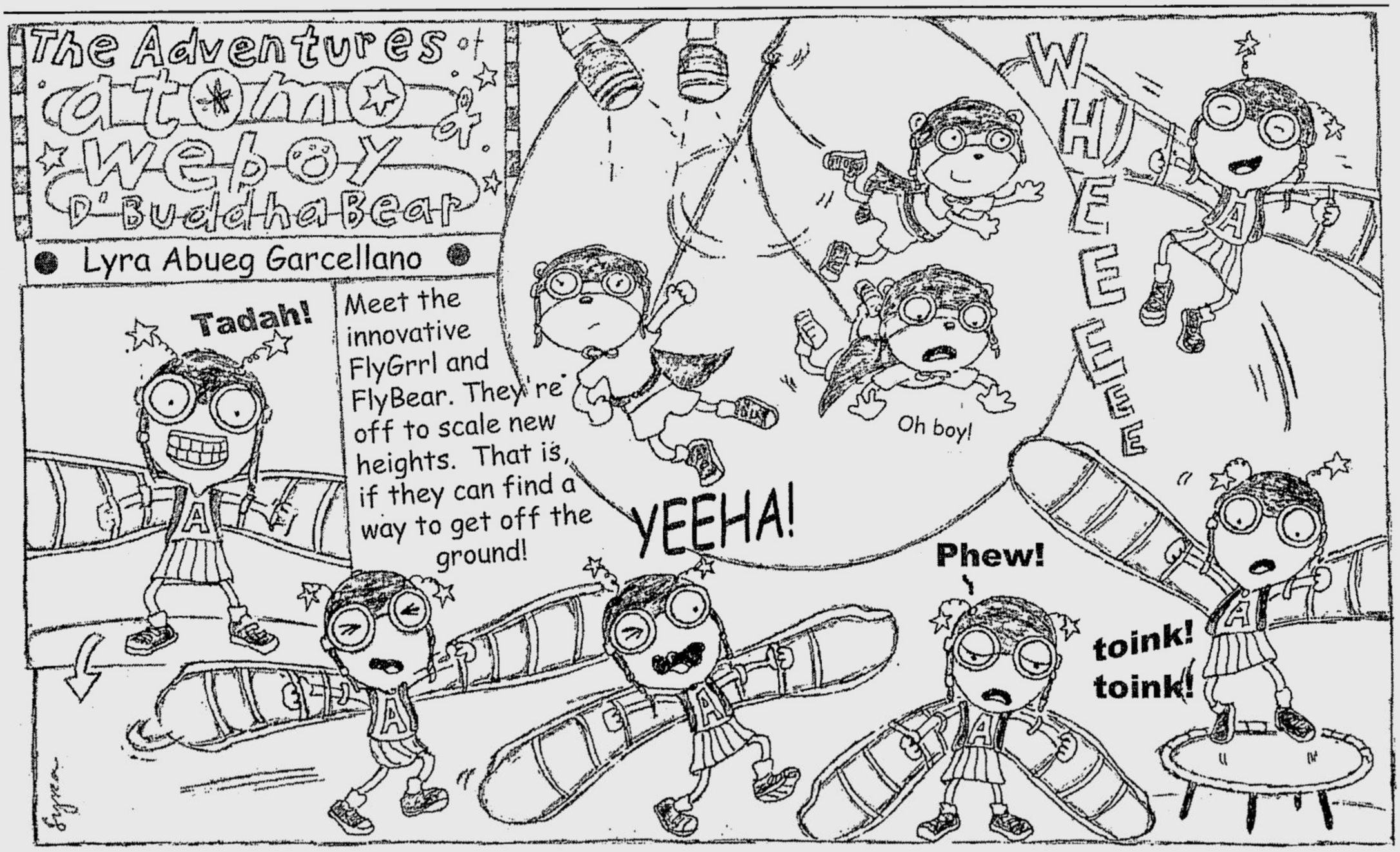
12. manservant
    - manservants
    - menservant
    - menservants

Answers :

1. series
2. potatoes
3. footage
4. corps
5. antennas
6. crises
7. furniture
8. sheep
9. species
10. symposiums/ symposia
11. phenomena
12. menservants

Ratings :

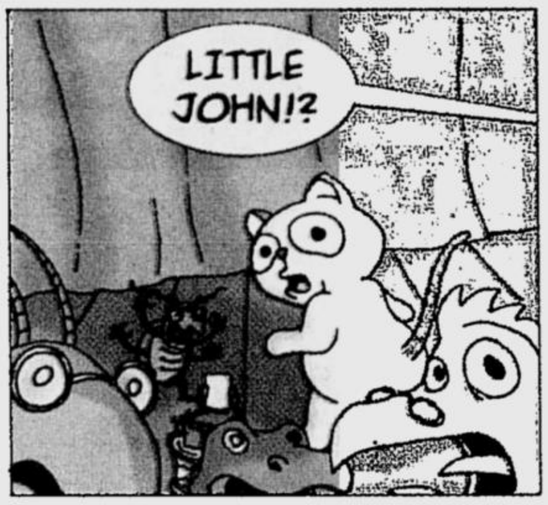
11 - 12 8 - 10 5 - 9

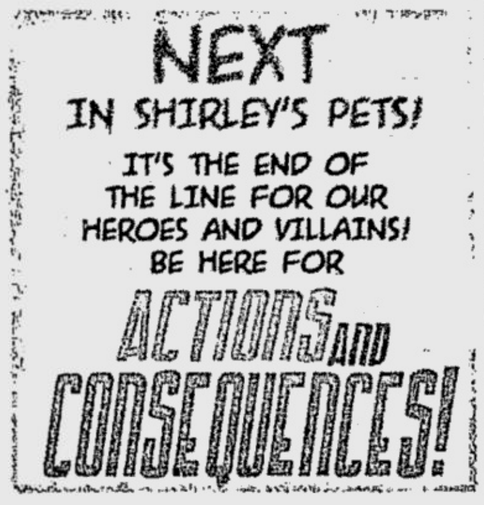


SHIRLEY'S PETS

BY ROBERT MAGNUSON

email: shifu@animail.net





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BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT

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Hey kids!

Join Junior Inquirer Easter Egg Hunt!

And get a chance to win a cool prize!

For the month of March, your mission is to find all the Easter eggs hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer issues on March 9, 16 and 23. Once you've collected 9 of the 12 eggs, answer them completely and correctly and put in an envelope with a piece of paper with your name, address, tel. no., signature and date of birth and mail them to us for a chance to win in our grand Easter raffle.

PROMO MECHANICS: EASTER EGG HUNT

1. The promotion is open to children 5 to 12 years old. For three (3) consecutive issues, March 9, 16 & 23, 2002, four (4) Easter eggs will be hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer.
2. Look for the eggs and accomplish the activity asked for in each egg and cut out.
3. Collect at least nine of the twelve eggs that will come out in the three (3) issues published within the promo duration (March 9, 16, 23) and with a piece of paper write your name, address, tel. no., affix your signature & date of birth, put these inside a white legal size envelope and mail to Easter Egg Hunt c/o Junior Inquirer, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor. Yogue & Mascardo Sts.,1231 Makati City.
4. This serves as a single official entry to the raffle draw during which the following prizes shall be given away. Thirty five (35) winners will be drawn.

Major prizes:
Five (5) Oregon Scientific Accelerator PC trainer
Five (5) Maxi Wagon
Five (5) Diva Starz Summer dolls
Five (5) Picture Pockets Barbie dolls with all around time bedroom playset
Five (5) Hotwheels world playset

Minor prizes:
Ten (10) Burger King Kids Club Toy Sets

Only entries with the minimum number of nine eggs and with complete correct answers are considered valid.

5. Entries must be received by 5:00pm of April 1, 2002 to qualify for the raffle draw.
6. An individual may send more than one entry but can only win once in the raffle draw. However, if a name is drawn more than once, the winner gets the prize with the higher value.
7. The raffle draw will be held on April 6, 2002 at 3:00pm and will be held at the Philippine Daily Inquirer office at Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague & Mascardo Sts., Makati City in the presence of an official DTI representative.
8. Raffle prizes are not convertible to cash.
9. Raffle draw winners will be notified by phone and registered mail and their names will be announced via print ads.
10. Winners can claim their prizes at the PDI office upon presentation of the notification letter and a valid ID. (school ID or passport)
11. Raffle prizes not claimed within 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of PDI with prior approval from DTI.
12. Employees and staff of PDI, their advertising agency and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity and affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.
13. Promo is valid only in GMA.

Oregon Scientific
MEGA BLOKS
DivaStarz
Barbie
Hot Wheels
BURGER KING

Per DTI NCR Permit No. 0820, Series of 2002